

CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY AND THE EXPLOSION OF INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

From Charismatic Renewal to Network Christianity, AD 1960-2000

The Genealogy of Christian Division

A Historical and Biblical Study of Schism, Reformation, and the Making of Modern Christianity

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Abstract

Between 1960 and 2000, Pentecostal spirituality moved decisively beyond the organizational boundaries in which classical Pentecostal denominations had consolidated it and became a transdenominational, transnational force. This chapter reconstructs that transformation through memoirs, movement literature, papal and denominational sources, ecumenical documents, archival and institutional histories, and modern scholarship on Pentecostalism, charismatic Christianity, media religion, megachurches, prosperity teaching, and independent networks. Beginning with Dennis Bennett's 1960 public testimony in an Episcopal parish, it traces mainline Protestant renewal, lay and para-ecclesial networks, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal after the 1967 Duquesne retreat, the Jesus Movement, Calvary Chapel, the Shepherding controversy, John Wimber and the Vineyard, the Third Wave, Word of Faith teaching, televangelism, prosperity theology, megachurch and seeker-sensitive models, late-century revival networks, and the emergence of apostolic-prophetic forms. The chapter argues that these developments were genealogically related without constituting one movement or one line of descent. Their common significance lay in a relocation and multiplication of religious authority: inherited office and confession remained important, but spiritual experience, ministry gifting, media visibility, entrepreneurial leadership, voluntary networks, and claimed prophetic or apostolic authorization acquired new translocal power. These changes became increasingly polycentric in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, where indigenous agency transformed imported models and generated new forms. A *Sola Scriptura* assessment affirms prayer for healing, spiritual gifts, missionary expectancy, accessible worship, accountable lay participation, and contextual mission while rejecting any prosperity formula, coercive discipleship system, prophecy, apostolic claim, sacramental synthesis, or charismatic experience that binds conscience beyond or contrary to Scripture. By 2000, denominational borders had become substantially more porous, preparing the networked and digitally amplified Christian landscape of the twenty-first century.

Keywords: *charismatic renewal; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Jesus Movement; Third Wave; Word of Faith; prosperity theology; megachurches; network Christianity*

1. Introduction: When Pentecostal Experience Crossed Denominational Walls

The middle of the twentieth century left Christianity with a new problem of classification. Classical Pentecostalism had already become recognizable through denominations such as the Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ, Church of God, International Pentecostal Holiness Church, and Foursquare. These bodies had headquarters, ministerial credentials, missions departments, Bible schools, periodicals, doctrinal statements, and increasingly stable institutional identities. At the same time, postwar healing evangelists and prophetic ministries had demonstrated that charisma could command an audience without depending on denominational office. The preceding period therefore ended with two realities existing side by side: Pentecostal experience had become institutionalized, yet the technologies and revival networks of modern evangelicalism were making religious authority more mobile than denominational structures could contain (Harrell, 1975; Synan, 1997).

Around 1960, that tension produced a major transition. Christians who remained Episcopalian, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Reformed, Baptist, and eventually Roman Catholic began to report experiences they described in Pentecostal language: baptism or renewal in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, prophecy, healing, spontaneous prayer, and a newly immediate sense of divine presence. Many did not intend to leave their churches. This institutional choice distinguished the emerging charismatic renewal from much early classical Pentecostalism. Whereas early Pentecostals often formed new congregations after being rejected by existing churches, many charismatics treated the gifts of the Spirit as a renewal to be carried into inherited ecclesial structures rather than as a reason to abandon them (Bennett, 1970; Hollenweger, 1997; Synan, 1997).

The term charismatic came to identify this pattern. It derives from the Greek *charismata*, "gifts of grace," used in the New Testament for gifts distributed by the Holy Spirit. Historically, however, charismatic Christianity became broader than a lexical definition. It described a family of renewal movements, practices, and networks that accepted the contemporary operation of gifts such as tongues, prophecy, healing, and discernment without necessarily adopting the institutional identity or every doctrinal distinctive of classical Pentecostal denominations. By the 1980s and 1990s, the field had widened again. The "Third Wave" associated with John Wimber and C. Peter Wagner sought signs and wonders without requiring a classical Pentecostal second-stage doctrine of Spirit baptism or tongues as initial evidence. Word of Faith teachers emphasized confession, healing, faith, and the believer's authority. Prosperity preachers connected faith to material well-being and financial sowing. Megachurches and seeker-sensitive churches developed new organizational logics, sometimes charismatic and sometimes not. Apostolic-prophetic networks claimed restored ministry offices while operating through relational networks rather than conventional denominations.

These trajectories intersected, borrowed from one another, and shared platforms, but they should not be collapsed into a single genealogy. Calvary Chapel was not simply a branch of the Vineyard, although the early Vineyard emerged through overlapping Calvary networks. Seeker-sensitive megachurches were not all charismatic, and charismatic congregations were not all seeker-sensitive. Prosperity theology drew on Pentecostal healing, positive-confession teaching, entrepreneurial revivalism, and media culture, but not every Pentecostal or charismatic church taught prosperity. The category New Apostolic Reformation is even more contested: C. Peter Wagner used it as a descriptive program for a perceived reorganization of

charismatic Christianity, while many churches later grouped under the label have never accepted it as a denominational identity (Christerson & Flory, 2017; Wagner, 1998).

The central argument of this chapter is therefore genealogical and institutional. Between 1960 and 2000, the most consequential change was not merely that more Christians spoke in tongues or prayed for healing. The change was that Christian authority became increasingly portable. A priest could host a charismatic prayer meeting without founding a new denomination. A television evangelist could gather a transnational constituency without a territorial parish. A megachurch pastor could shape worship and ministry models far beyond his congregation through books, conferences, recordings, and consulting. A prophetic network could ordain or commission leaders through relationships that did not resemble historic episcopal, presbyterian, or congregational structures. A ministry brand could function like a quasi-denomination while legally remaining a nonprofit corporation or informal network.

That portability generated genuine possibilities for mission, renewal, and cross-denominational fellowship. It also generated new risks. When authority becomes less attached to inherited structures, it does not disappear. It migrates to personality, testimony, media reach, perceived anointing, private revelation, financial success, or relational access to a recognized leader. The biblical question is therefore not institution versus spontaneity. Scripture warns against dead traditionalism and human commandments, but it also requires tested teaching, qualified leadership, accountable discipline, truthfulness, and orderly use of spiritual gifts. The history from 1960 to 2000 is best understood as a laboratory in which Christianity repeatedly renegotiated the relationship among Word, Spirit, institution, experience, media, and charisma.

2. Sources, Terminology, Chronology, and Method

The evidence for charismatic Christianity is unusually abundant because the period was intensely mediated. Memoirs, sermons, audio cassettes, television programs, newsletters, magazines, conference recordings, denominational archives, papal addresses, organizational histories, advertisements, direct-mail appeals, and later websites allow historians to reconstruct both public theology and institutional strategy. Yet abundance does not eliminate bias. Charismatic testimonies were often produced to edify, recruit, fundraise, or validate a ministry. Critics sometimes treated emotional worship or disputed supernatural claims as sufficient proof of fraud or irrationality. Historical method must therefore distinguish between what a source documents and what it interprets. A healing testimony establishes that a healing was claimed; it does not by itself establish the medical mechanism. A prophecy establishes what was said or remembered; its divine origin remains a theological claim requiring biblical and evidentiary testing.

Several terms require precision. Classical Pentecostalism refers here to the denominational and church families that emerged from the early twentieth-century Pentecostal revivals and made Spirit baptism, charismatic gifts, healing, evangelism, and eschatological expectation central to their identity. Charismatic renewal refers primarily to Pentecostal-type spiritual experience within churches that did not historically identify as Pentecostal, especially from the 1960s onward. Neo-charismatic is a broader scholarly category for independent churches and ministries that emphasize the Spirit's power, healing, prophecy, deliverance, spiritual warfare, or related practices without necessarily belonging to classical Pentecostal or historic-denominational charismatic structures. Third Wave is the term C. Peter Wagner popularized for a later stream associated especially with signs and wonders, John Wimber, the Vineyard, and evangelical institutions that did not generally require Pentecostal initiation formulas (Wagner, 1988).

Word of Faith refers to a more specific teaching stream associated prominently with E. W. Kenyon's earlier writings and, in the later twentieth century, Kenneth E. Hagin and a network of teachers who stressed faith, spoken confession, healing, covenant promises, and the believer's authority. The precise intellectual relationship between Kenyon, Hagin, metaphysical traditions, Holiness, divine-healing teaching, and evangelical faith theology remains disputed; responsible history should not reduce the movement to a single alleged source. Prosperity theology overlaps with Word of Faith but is not identical to it. It is better treated as a family of teachings that link faith, giving, obedience, divine favor, and material or bodily well-being with varying degrees of explicitness (Bowler, 2013; Harrison, 2005).

Megachurch in this chapter is principally an organizational category, not a doctrine. It conventionally describes a very large Protestant congregation, often measured by weekly attendance in the thousands, but the historical phenomenon is more important than a numerical threshold. Megachurches concentrate personnel, technology, specialized ministries, and cultural production at a scale that can weaken inherited denominational loyalties and create a self-sufficient religious ecosystem. Seeker-sensitive describes strategies designed to reduce cultural barriers for religiously unaffiliated or irregular attenders through accessible preaching, contemporary music, specialized programming, and intentional attention to the visitor's experience. Such churches may be conservative evangelical, charismatic, Reformed, Baptist, or otherwise. They should not be genealogically assigned to charismatic Christianity merely because some later charismatic megachurches adopted similar techniques.

Network Christianity refers to forms of organization in which relationships among leaders, ministries, congregations, conferences, and media platforms can be more decisive than formal denominational constitutions. Christerson and Flory (2017) use the category independent network Christianity to describe rapidly growing charismatic networks characterized by entrepreneurial leaders, supernaturalist practice, flexible organization, and translocal connections. This analytical category is especially useful for the late twentieth century because it explains why a movement may be institutionally powerful while remaining difficult to locate on a conventional denominational family tree.

The chapter's principal chronological scope is AD 1960-2000. Earlier antecedents appear only when necessary to explain the origin of a development, and post-2000 evidence is used only in the section on contemporary significance. This boundary matters because the Internet, social media, livestreaming, and platform-based religious authority transformed many of these dynamics after 2000. The late twentieth century built the network architecture; the digital age would accelerate it.

Table 1. Selected chronology of charismatic and network Christianity, AD 1959-2000

Date	Development	Genealogical significance
1959-1960	Prayer group at St. Mark's Episcopal Church; Dennis Bennett speaks publicly on 3 April 1960	A widely publicized marker of charismatic renewal within a historic Protestant denomination.
1967	Duquesne Weekend; rapid spread to Notre Dame and other Catholic centers	Pentecostal-type experience becomes an internal Catholic renewal rather than a denominational exit.
1968-1972	Jesus Movement expands; Calvary Chapel becomes a major Southern California center	Evangelical conversion, youth counterculture, contemporary music, and charismatic openness converge.
1973-1975	TBN founded; RHEMA Bible Training Center opens; Willow Creek begins; the Shepherding/Discipleship movement becomes influential; Paul VI addresses Catholic charismatics	Media, faith-teaching institutions, seeker-oriented organization, relational authority networks, and Catholic integration all accelerate.
1977	Wimber forms Calvary Chapel of Yorba Linda; Universal Church of the Kingdom of God founded in Brazil	Third Wave and Global South neo-Pentecostal trajectories gain institutional form in different settings.
1980	Saddleback Church begins	Purpose-driven and research-informed megachurch organization expands transdenominational influence.
1982	Wimber joins Vineyard; Fuller course MC510 begins	Signs-and-wonders practice enters a major evangelical church network and seminary context.
1986-1988	Power Evangelism published; Wagner publishes <i>The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit</i>	Third Wave receives a recognizable theological and missiological vocabulary.
Late 1980s	Televangelist scandals; growing Word of Faith and prosperity networks	Media religion shows both global reach and serious accountability vulnerabilities.
1994-1995	Toronto revival begins in a Vineyard congregation; Brownsville revival begins in an Assemblies of God church in Pensacola.	International revival circuits carry practices and testimonies rapidly through travel, recordings, conferences, and visiting ministers.
1998	Wagner edits <i>The New Apostolic Churches</i>	Apostolic-network models are named and promoted as an alternative to older denominational organization.
2000	Charismatic, megachurch, prosperity, and apostolic-prophetic forms are globally networked	Denominational identity remains important, but hybrid and network affiliations have become normal.

3. What Existed Before 1960: The Inheritance of Pentecostalism, Evangelicalism, and Healing Revivalism

By 1960, Pentecostalism was no longer an experimental fringe. It had matured into a global family of denominations with missions, educational institutions, publishing houses, credentialing systems, and increasingly stable doctrines. The Holiness and Finished Work branches had settled into distinct denominational families; Trinitarian and Oneness Pentecostalism had

separated over the doctrine of God; and many Pentecostals had entered broader evangelical cooperation after the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942. Yet the movement continued to define itself through expectation of spiritual gifts, divine healing, revival, and the imminent return of Christ (Anderson, 2014; Synan, 1997).

The postwar healing revival had simultaneously demonstrated a different organizational model. William Branham, Oral Roberts, A. A. Allen, T. L. Osborn, and other evangelists attracted audiences through tents, radio, magazines, and traveling campaigns. The Voice of Healing network helped create a shared revival marketplace in which ministers could acquire recognition through reports of miracles and perceived spiritual gifts. Some evangelists eventually built durable organizations, universities, or media ministries. Others declined, fractured, or became centered on increasingly distinctive teachings. This world taught a generation of Christians that spiritual authority could be transdenominational and mediated through communication technology as much as through local church office (Harrell, 1975).

The Latter Rain movement that emerged in 1948 added another theme that would become increasingly influential after 1960: restoration of ministries and gifts believed to have been lost to the Church. Latter Rain teachers emphasized prophetic utterance, laying on of hands, spiritual gifts, worship renewal, and, in some circles, restored apostles and prophets. Classical Pentecostal denominations such as the Assemblies of God rejected important Latter Rain claims and practices, but the movement's restorationist vocabulary did not disappear. It survived through independent ministries, later prophetic circles, and the language of "fivefold ministry" drawn from [Ephesians 4:11-16](#). The genealogy is therefore one of influence and reappropriation rather than an unbroken institutional succession.

At the same time, conservative Protestantism was itself changing. The fundamentalist-modernist conflicts had produced separatist institutions, but the postwar evangelical movement sought greater intellectual engagement, cultural participation, interdenominational cooperation, and public legitimacy without surrendering historic doctrines. Billy Graham's evangelistic prominence, Christianity Today, Fuller Theological Seminary, the National Association of Evangelicals, and expanding parachurch ministries created an evangelical environment more institutionally open than older separatist fundamentalism. This mattered because charismatic practices would increasingly enter churches whose theology was evangelical but whose institutional identity was not Pentecostal.

The final inherited factor was media. Radio had already detached the preacher's voice from the local pulpit. Religious publishing had long allowed authors to shape believers beyond denominational borders. Film, television, low-cost audio recording, cassette duplication, direct mail, and commercial air travel were about to intensify the process. Charismatic Christianity did not cause media religion, but it proved exceptionally adaptable to it because testimony, healing prayer, music, prophecy, and personality translated well into mass-mediated forms.

The situation immediately before 1960 can therefore be summarized as a convergence. Pentecostal denominations had normalized charismatic experience; healing revivalists had normalized transdenominational ministry; postwar evangelicalism had normalized parachurch cooperation; and modern media had normalized religious influence beyond territorial ecclesiastical structures. The charismatic renewal would bring these developments inside historic denominations rather than merely building another Pentecostal denomination alongside them.

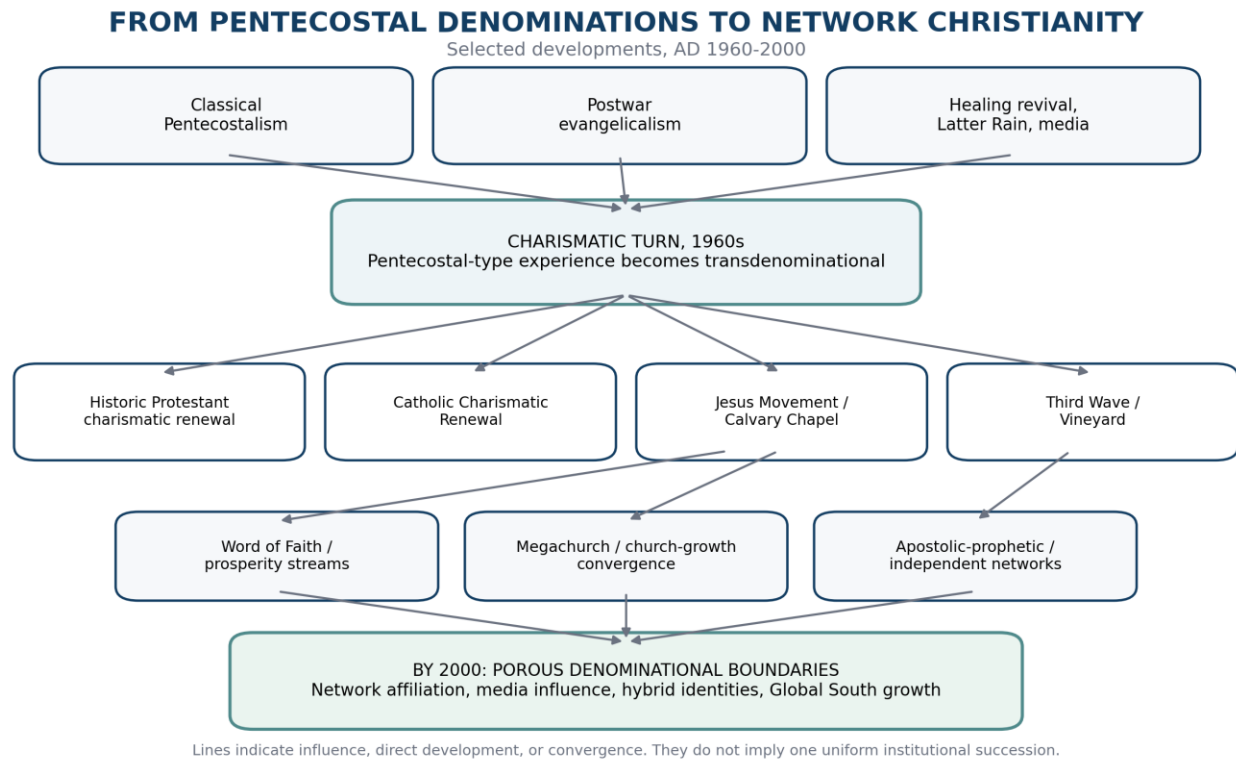


Figure 1. From Pentecostal denominations to network Christianity, selected developments, AD 1960-2000.

Note. The diagram distinguishes influence, direct development, and convergence. It does not imply that every later stream descends institutionally from one revival or organization.

4. The Early Charismatic Renewal: Dennis Bennett and Pentecostal Experience Without Denominational Exit

4.1 St. Mark's, Van Nuys, and the public breakthrough of 1960

On 3 April 1960, Dennis J. Bennett, rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California, publicly told his congregation that he had experienced the Holy Spirit in a way associated with Pentecostal practice, including speaking in tongues. The disclosure did not create charismatic Christianity from nothing. Pentecostal experiences had already appeared among non-Pentecostal Christians, and figures such as the South African Pentecostal David du Plessis had been building relationships across denominational boundaries. Bennett's announcement nevertheless became an unusually visible public marker because it involved a priest in a socially respectable historic Protestant denomination and attracted national press attention (Bennett, 1970; Synan, 1997).

The immediate result was conflict rather than uncomplicated revival. Some members welcomed the development, others considered it divisive or doctrinally suspect, and Bennett resigned his parish. He soon became rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Seattle, where charismatic prayer and teaching could develop in a more hospitable environment. His later memoir, *Nine O'Clock in the Morning*, circulated widely and gave non-Pentecostal readers a narrative in which charismatic experience did not require abandoning liturgy, ordained ministry, or an inherited church identity (Bennett, 1970).

The institutional significance of Bennett's story was greater than the experience itself. Classical Pentecostalism had often been socially organized around the question, "Have you received Pentecost, and will you join a Pentecostal fellowship if your church rejects it?" The charismatic renewal increasingly asked a different question: "Can the gifts of the Spirit renew this church from within?" That shift altered Christian genealogy. Renewal could now move horizontally across traditions rather than producing an immediate daughter denomination.

4.2 Mainline diffusion and the creation of a transdenominational identity

During the 1960s, charismatic prayer groups and clergy networks appeared in Anglican/Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Reformed, Baptist, and other Protestant contexts. Their theology varied. Some used classical Pentecostal language of baptism in the Holy Spirit as a distinct post-conversion experience. Others preferred filling, release, renewal, or empowerment in order to avoid implying that ordinary Christians lacked the Holy Spirit before a charismatic experience.

Some accepted tongues as common and spiritually valuable without treating them as the universal initial evidence of Spirit baptism. These differences made the charismatic movement less doctrinally uniform than many classical Pentecostal denominations.

This flexibility helped the renewal spread. A Lutheran could pray in tongues without accepting Wesleyan entire sanctification. An Anglican could seek healing while retaining episcopal polity and sacramental worship. A Reformed believer might accept prophecy as a subordinate spiritual impression while rejecting Pentecostal theories about a second blessing. A charismatic identity therefore functioned as an overlay upon older identities rather than necessarily replacing them. The result was a new form of Christian hybridity: Anglican-charismatic, Lutheran-charismatic, Reformed-charismatic, evangelical-charismatic, and later Catholic-charismatic.

The strength of this model was its capacity to reopen neglected biblical material. Passages such as [1 Corinthians 12:4-11](#), [1 Corinthians 14:1-5](#), [Romans 12:3-8](#), and [Acts 2:14-21](#) became subjects of congregational practice rather than only historical commentary. Prayer for healing, lay participation, spontaneous praise, testimony, and expectation of divine guidance received new emphasis. In churches where worship had become formal without corresponding spiritual vitality, charismatic renewal could function as a serious call to prayer, mission, holiness, and dependence on the Spirit.

Its weakness was the possibility of creating an experiential elite inside existing churches. If speaking in tongues or a dramatic "Spirit-filled" experience became an informal badge of superior spirituality, the renewal could reproduce the very division Paul rebuked at Corinth. The apostolic model recognizes diversity of gifts and explicitly denies that every believer exercises the same gift ([1 Corinthians 12:27-30](#)). The theological legitimacy of charismatic renewal therefore depends not merely on affirming gifts, but on submitting their exercise to the apostolic priorities of love, intelligibility, edification, order, and doctrinal testing ([1 Corinthians 13:1-13](#); [1 Corinthians 14:26-33](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:19-22](#)).

4.3 David du Plessis and ecumenical encounter

David Johannes du Plessis, often remembered by the nickname "Mr. Pentecost," became one of the most important bridge figures between classical Pentecostalism and the wider Christian world. A South African Pentecostal minister, du Plessis cultivated conversations with ecumenical leaders and historic churches at a time when many Pentecostals regarded ecumenical institutions with deep suspicion. His role did not mean that Pentecostal denominations suddenly embraced the World Council of Churches or Roman Catholicism. It demonstrated, rather, that charismatic experience could become a subject of sustained encounter across confessional boundaries.

Du Plessis' ecumenical contacts also exposed an enduring tension. Christian unity is biblically commanded, but unity cannot be constructed by suspending truth. The charismatic movement's ability to cross denominational borders sometimes encouraged Christians to treat shared spiritual experience as proof that inherited doctrinal contradictions no longer mattered. Yet Catholics and Protestants who prayed together could still disagree fundamentally about justification, the Eucharist, the papacy, Mary, sacramental mediation, and ecclesial authority. Shared experience may create fellowship and mutual understanding; it does not logically resolve conflicting truth claims.

Key-person profile. Dennis J. Bennett (1917-1991)

Background	Episcopal priest whose 1960 public testimony became an early national marker of mainline charismatic renewal.
Historical role	Demonstrated that Pentecostal-type spiritual experience could be pursued within a historic Protestant communion.
Institutional significance	Shifted the renewal question from denominational exit toward renewal within inherited church structures.
Major source	Nine O'Clock in the Morning (1970), an influential autobiographical account of the early renewal.

4.4 Lay networks, the Full Gospel Business Men, and the Anglo-world infrastructure of renewal

The charismatic renewal spread not only through clergy and congregations but also through para-ecclesial lay networks that created meeting spaces outside normal denominational channels. The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI), founded by the Armenian American businessman Demos Shakarian in Los Angeles in 1952, became one of the most effective examples. Breakfasts, banquets, testimony meetings, the Voice magazine, and later international travel allowed businesspeople from many church backgrounds to encounter Pentecostal testimonies of conversion, healing, tongues, and Spirit empowerment without first joining a Pentecostal denomination. During the 1960s the Fellowship expanded internationally, including large "airlift" initiatives that carried lay witnesses into Europe and other regions. This network form helped normalize a crucial charismatic principle: spiritual experience and testimony could travel through voluntary associations faster than formal denominational structures could deliberate about them (Anderson, 2013; Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, n.d.; Maiden, 2023).

A parallel infrastructure developed in Britain and the wider Anglo-world. In 1964 the Anglican priest Michael Harper became the first director of the Fountain Trust, which used conferences, teaching events, publications, clergy contacts, and an ecumenical network to interpret Pentecostal experience for Christians who intended to remain Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Reformed, or otherwise connected to established churches. The importance of the Fountain Trust was not simply organizational. It supplied language, theological mediation, and relational credibility for a movement whose practices could otherwise appear to historic churches as an imported Pentecostal subculture. Similar cross-confessional currents appeared in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, and other settings, creating what recent scholarship describes as a translocal charismatic world rather than a single American export (Maiden, 2023).

These lay and para-ecclesial networks are genealogically important because they anticipated later network Christianity. They possessed neither the sacramental jurisdiction of a church nor the representative bureaucracy of a denomination, yet they could shape preaching, worship, spiritual vocabulary, and ministry expectations across thousands of congregations. Their strengths were speed, accessibility, testimony, and cross-confessional fellowship. Their corresponding vulnerability was that influence could become detached from local pastoral accountability or confessional scrutiny. The institutional question that would become acute in later apostolic networks was therefore already present in the early renewal: who tests a translocal ministry when its authority rests primarily on perceived spiritual fruit and relational trust?

5. Catholic Charismatic Renewal: Pentecostal Gifts Inside Sacramental Catholicism

5.1 The Duquesne Weekend of 1967

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is conventionally traced to a retreat of students and faculty connected with Duquesne University in Pittsburgh on 17-19 February 1967 at the Ark and the Dove retreat house near Gibsonia, Pennsylvania. Participants had been reading Pentecostal-oriented literature and praying for a deeper experience of the Holy Spirit. During the retreat, several reported experiences that they interpreted as baptism in the Holy Spirit, accompanied in some cases by tongues, intense prayer, or a heightened awareness of God's presence. The experience quickly spread through contacts at the University of Notre Dame and other Catholic campuses (Ciciliot, 2019).

The event must be situated inside the Catholic world of the 1960s. The Second Vatican Council had concluded in 1965 after emphasizing renewal, lay participation, Scripture, ecumenical engagement, and the Church's missionary vocation. Vatican II did not create the charismatic renewal, and its documents did not teach classical Pentecostal initial-evidence doctrine. The postconciliar environment nevertheless made organized lay renewal and ecumenical interaction more imaginable than they had been in earlier periods. Catholic charismatics could therefore interpret Pentecostal practices as a renewal of gifts already theoretically acknowledged in Catholic theology rather than as a conversion to Protestant Pentecostalism.

5.2 Notre Dame, prayer groups, and covenant communities

From Duquesne, the renewal expanded rapidly through Notre Dame, Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, and wider Catholic networks. Prayer meetings became a distinctive institutional form. They allowed lay Catholics to sing spontaneously, pray extemporaneously, offer testimonies, exercise tongues and interpretation, pray for healing, and expect prophecy while remaining attached to parishes and the sacramental life of the Church. Conferences at Notre Dame gave the movement national visibility, while service committees and covenant communities supplied organization without creating a separate denomination (Ciciliot, 2019).

The covenant-community model deserves particular attention. Some charismatic Catholics formed intentional communities with structured commitments, pastoral leadership, common prayer, mutual accountability, and in some cases distinctive household or gender roles. These communities could provide serious discipleship and durable fellowship. They could also concentrate authority in unelected or charismatic leaders and create internal cultures whose practical power exceeded normal parish relationships. The history of renewal therefore demonstrates again that anti-denominational language does not eliminate governance; it often creates governance in less conventional forms.

5.3 Papal reception and the integration of charismatic gifts

Catholic hierarchical responses moved from caution toward qualified reception. Pope Paul VI's address to the Third International Congress of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal on 19 May 1975 welcomed the renewal as an opportunity for the Church while simultaneously locating it within Catholic sacramental, ecclesial, and pastoral order. Later popes continued this pattern of encouragement and regulation. The establishment of CHARIS, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service, by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, with statutes effective at Pentecost 2019, illustrates the long-term institutional integration of a movement that began through largely informal prayer networks (Francis, 2019; Holy See Press Office, 2019; Paul VI, 1975).

The renewal also helped create formal ecumenical conversations that were historically unprecedented. Contacts involving David du Plessis and Catholic ecumenical leaders led to the international Roman Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue, whose first plenary meeting was held in Zurich in 1972. The first phase examined baptism in the Holy Spirit, Christian initiation, charisms, worship, discernment, healing, Scripture, tradition, and related questions. Its importance should not be overstated as institutional union: the dialogue explicitly sought mutual understanding while acknowledging real disagreements over authority, sacramental theology, and tradition. Nevertheless, it demonstrated how charismatic renewal created a new arena in which Christians with incompatible ecclesiologies could discuss spiritual experience and doctrine without pretending those differences had disappeared (Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, 1976).

This integration produced a form of sacramental-charismatic synthesis. Catholic charismatics could speak of baptism in the Holy Spirit while affirming infant baptism, confirmation, Eucharistic sacramentalism, episcopal authority, devotion to Mary, and other elements of Catholic doctrine. The phrase baptism in the Holy Spirit therefore did not mean precisely the same thing in every Pentecostal and Catholic context. Many Catholic charismatics interpreted it as an experiential release, awakening, or appropriation of grace already sacramentally given, rather than as a new sacrament or a denial that the Spirit had been received before the charismatic experience.

5.4 What changed and what did not

Historically, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal changed Catholic spirituality more than it changed Catholic dogma. It normalized extemporaneous prayer, lay testimony, contemporary praise music, healing prayer, prophecy, and ecumenical contact for millions of Catholics. It created new communities, evangelistic initiatives, conferences, and ministries. Yet it did not officially replace the Catholic magisterium, redefine the Mass, abolish sacramental priesthood, or move the Roman Catholic Church toward *Sola Scriptura*. The genealogy is therefore renewal within an existing communion, not a schism from Rome.

This distinction is crucial for biblical evaluation. From a *Sola Scriptura* standpoint, Catholic charismatics may genuinely recover biblical practices neglected in parts of their tradition, including fervent prayer, expectation of spiritual gifts, lay witness, Scripture reading, and missionary zeal. Those recoveries do not automatically resolve doctrines inherited from Roman Catholicism that require separate biblical testing. Charismatic experience cannot validate papal claims, Marian devotion, sacramental theories, or other doctrines merely because spiritual vitality accompanies them. The same principle applies in reverse: disagreements over Catholic doctrine do not prove that every report of answered prayer, healing, or genuine spiritual renewal is false. Historical fairness and theological discernment require these questions to remain distinct.

Table 2. Classical Pentecostalism and major charismatic-renewal forms compared

Stream	Institutional location	Typical Spirit-baptism framing	Tongues	Genealogical character
Classical Pentecostal	Pentecostal denominations and congregations	Often a distinct empowering experience; details vary by Holiness or Finished Work traditions	Frequently important; some bodies teach initial evidence	Denominational family formed before mid-century.
Historic Protestant charismatic	Anglican/Episcopal, Lutheran, Reformed, Methodist, Baptist and other churches	Renewal, filling, release, or empowerment; often less standardized	Valued by many but usually not a universal membership test	Internal renewal overlaying inherited denominational identity.
Catholic charismatic	Roman Catholic parishes, prayer groups, covenant communities	Often understood as experiential release or renewal of grace already sacramentally received	Practiced but not made a dogma of Catholic initiation	Internal renewal integrated with Catholic sacramental and episcopal structures.
Third Wave / Vineyard	Evangelical churches and networks	Empowerment and repeated fillings within a kingdom framework	Accepted but not required as initial evidence	Evangelical-charismatic renewal that intentionally distinguishes itself from classical Pentecostal initiation formulas.

6. The Jesus Movement and Evangelical-Charismatic Convergence

6.1 Counterculture, youth alienation, and the search for a less institutional Christianity

The Jesus Movement emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s from the social world of American youth culture. The Vietnam War, the civil-rights struggle, generational conflict, the sexual revolution, drug experimentation, distrust of institutions, and the broader counterculture created a population skeptical of conventional religious respectability. Some young people who had rejected middle-class church culture became receptive to an explicitly Christian message presented in informal language, communal settings, contemporary music, and experiential testimony (Eskridge, 2013).

The movement was not uniformly charismatic, but charismatic expectation was common enough to matter. Many Jesus People read Acts as an immediately relevant pattern, expected healing and spiritual gifts, practiced spontaneous prayer, and combined biblical literalism with end-times urgency. At the same time, evangelical conversionism remained central. The message was not simply "experience the Spirit" but repent, trust Jesus, read the Bible, join Christian fellowship, and evangelize others. This combination allowed the Jesus Movement to become a bridge between conservative evangelical theology and charismatic practice.

6.2 Calvary Chapel, Chuck Smith, and Lonnie Frisbee

Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California, became one of the most influential institutional homes of the Jesus Movement. Chuck Smith began pastoring a small congregation in 1965. By 1968, his ministry had become increasingly open to the hippie counterculture, and the young evangelist Lonnie Frisbee became a catalytic figure in reaching that population. Calvary Chapel developed an informal worship culture, verse-by-verse Bible teaching, evangelism, contemporary music, and openness to spiritual gifts without reproducing every classical Pentecostal distinctive (Eskridge, 2013; Calvary Chapel, n.d.).

The ministry's importance extends beyond one congregation. Calvary Chapel became a church-planting family and helped normalize a model in which evangelical biblical teaching, contemporary worship, charismatic openness, and low-formality ecclesial culture could coexist. This model would influence later Vineyard development and much of the independent evangelical-charismatic world. Yet the genealogical relationship should be stated precisely: the Vineyard was not simply a renamed Calvary Chapel denomination. John Wimber's congregation began within Calvary Chapel and entered the emerging Vineyard network in 1982, after theological differences and relational developments created a distinct trajectory (Vineyard Canada, n.d.).

6.3 Jesus music and the remaking of worship culture

One of the Jesus Movement's most durable legacies was musical. Folk, rock, and popular idioms were incorporated into Christian witness and congregational worship, helping create the modern contemporary Christian music industry and a new repertoire of praise songs. The change was theological as well as aesthetic. Informal songs often addressed God directly in the language of intimacy and personal devotion. This fit charismatic spirituality, in which worship was not only preparation for preaching but a setting in which believers expected to encounter God's presence.

The shift had mixed consequences. It made congregational expression more accessible to younger participants and encouraged original Christian cultural production rather than simple imitation of older hymn forms. It also created a commercial ecosystem in which worship music could become branded, copyrighted, professionally produced, and distributed by ministries whose influence crossed denominational borders. By the 1990s, churches that disagreed strongly about sacraments or spiritual gifts could sing many of the same songs. Worship became one of the principal channels through which post-denominational Christian culture spread.

6.4 New church forms and the limits of anti-institutionalism

The Jesus Movement frequently criticized "organized religion," but the movement's surviving influence came largely through organizations it created or transformed. Communes required rules. Coffeehouses required leaders. Churches required property, finances, discipline, teaching, and succession. Music ministries required contracts and distribution. Calvary Chapel itself became a durable association of churches. The trajectory repeated a pattern already seen in Pentecostal history: movements born in protest against institutional rigidity eventually develop structures because mission and continuity require them.

The key issue, therefore, is not whether a church is institutional. Every continuing Christian community develops patterns of authority. The biblical question is whether those patterns remain accountable to the qualifications and limits Scripture gives to Christian leadership. Jesus explicitly contrasts Christian authority with domineering rule ([Mark 10:42-45](#)). Elders must be exemplary rather than coercive ([1 Peter 5:1-4](#)), and teachers remain answerable to the apostolic gospel rather than to the success of their platform.

Before / Change / Result: Why the Jesus Movement mattered

Before	Postwar evangelicalism often retained conservative doctrine but could be culturally distant from late-1960s youth and suspicious of charismatic practice.
Change	Jesus People combined conversion, Bible reading, informal community, contemporary music, evangelism, and varying degrees of charismatic expectation.
Result	New church forms, Calvary Chapel growth, contemporary Christian music, and a durable evangelical-charismatic convergence that influenced the Vineyard and later independent churches.

6.5 The Shepherding movement: discipleship, authority, and the danger of unaccountable submission

The rapid growth of independent charismatic Christianity soon generated a problem that its own leaders recognized: converts and newly empowered lay believers needed formation, discipline, pastoral care, and durable community. In the early 1970s a group of teachers based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, including Bob Mumford, Charles Simpson, Derek Prince, Don Basham, and Ern Baxter, developed what became known as the Shepherding or Discipleship movement. Through Christian Growth Ministries, the magazine *New Wine*, conferences, and personal networks, they stressed covenant relationship, submission, discipleship, and the principle that leaders themselves should be accountable to other leaders. In historical context, the movement was not simply a quest for control. It was an attempted remedy for the fragmentation, individualism, and weak pastoral formation that could accompany an expanding non-denominational renewal (Anderson, 2013; Ciciliot, 2021).

The remedy, however, exposed the danger inherent in informal spiritual authority. In stronger applications, a believer's "shepherd" could acquire influence over choices concerning marriage, employment, relocation, finances, ministry, and church relationships. A structure promoted as mutual accountability could become a vertical chain of submission whose practical boundaries were difficult to appeal. The controversy divided charismatic leaders, strained ecumenical relationships, and demonstrated that rejecting denominational bureaucracy does not remove hierarchy. It can instead relocate hierarchy into personal relationships where rules are less visible and correction more difficult (Ciciliot, 2021; Digitale, 1990).

By the 1980s the Fort Lauderdale network had fragmented, and former leaders publicly acknowledged serious excesses in the application of shepherding teaching. The episode is therefore a major bridge in the genealogy of independent Christianity. It anticipated later covenant communities, spiritual-covering language, relational networks, and apostolic models in which authority is justified less by denominational office than by personal discipleship and perceived spiritual fatherhood. Historically, the movement corrected a real weakness, the absence of durable formation in parts of the renewal, but its overreach showed that accountability cannot be created by making one Christian's conscience the possession of another.

The New Testament commands discipleship, mutual submission, and respect for faithful leaders, yet it places explicit limits on pastoral power. Elders are to shepherd without domineering over those entrusted to them ([1 Peter 5:1-4](#)), and Jesus contrasts Christian leadership with rulers who "lord it over" others ([Mark 10:42-45](#)). Paul can therefore describe apostolic ministry as service that works for believers' joy rather than as mastery over their faith ([2 Corinthians 1:24](#)). This historical episode supplies an important control for every later appeal to covering, fatherhood, apostolic alignment, or prophetic submission: biblical authority is real, but it is ministerial, bounded, testable, and subordinate to Christ and his Word.

7. The Third Wave: John Wimber, the Vineyard, and Signs and Wonders in Evangelical Christianity

7.1 Why a "Third Wave" was distinguished from Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal

By the early 1980s, another stream was becoming visible among evangelicals who embraced healing, prophecy, deliverance, and other supernatural gifts but did not identify themselves as classical Pentecostals and did not necessarily describe their experience through the language of a post-conversion baptism in the Holy Spirit. C. Peter Wagner later described this development as a "third wave," after classical Pentecostalism and the mid-century charismatic renewal. The label was descriptive and programmatic, not the name of a single denomination. Its usefulness lies in identifying a shift: supernatural ministry was being normalized inside evangelical institutions without requiring converts to adopt Pentecostal initiation theology (Wagner, 1988).

The Third Wave therefore differed from classical Pentecostalism in several respects. It generally rejected the claim that all Spirit-baptized believers must speak in tongues as initial physical evidence. It often interpreted the Spirit's empowering work within conversion and subsequent fillings rather than through a mandatory second-stage experience. Its leaders were frequently rooted in evangelical church-growth, missions, and Bible-teaching networks rather than Holiness denominations. Yet the practices could look strongly Pentecostal: extended worship, healing prayer, prophetic impressions, deliverance, testimonies of supernatural guidance, and expectation of signs accompanying evangelism.

7.2 John Wimber: from church growth to "doing the stuff"

John Wimber became the most influential pastoral figure in this stream. A former musician and a convert in the Quaker tradition, Wimber worked in church-growth research and in 1974 became founding director of the Department of Church Growth at the Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth. In 1977, he and a Bible-study group formed Calvary Chapel of Yorba Linda. His theology and practice increasingly emphasized healing, the gifts of the Spirit, and the present activity of the kingdom of God. In 1982 his congregation joined the young Vineyard network founded by Kenn Gulliksen and became the Vineyard Christian Fellowship of Anaheim. Wimber soon assumed leadership of the growing movement (Vineyard Canada, n.d.; Wimber & Springer, 1986).

Wimber's distinctive language was deliberately practical. Christians were not only to believe that Jesus healed in the first century; they were to pray for the sick, listen for the Spirit's guidance, evangelize with confidence, and accept the possibility that God might act in ways that challenged respectable evangelical expectations. His popular ministry phrase about "doing the stuff" communicated dissatisfaction with a Christianity that affirmed biblical miracles doctrinally while expecting little comparable divine action in contemporary ministry.

The theological center of Wimber's approach was the kingdom of God. Drawing on the "already and not yet" framework common in twentieth-century New Testament scholarship, Vineyard teaching held that God's kingdom had decisively entered history through Jesus while awaiting consummation at his return. This framework allowed Wimber to expect healing without claiming that all suffering must disappear now. The kingdom is truly present, but not exhaustively realized. That tension provided a more biblically plausible framework for healing than systems in which failure to recover is routinely attributed to insufficient faith.

7.3 Fuller Theological Seminary and MC510

The relationship between Wimber and Fuller Theological Seminary gave the signs-and-wonders movement unusual access to an evangelical academic institution. In 1982, C. Peter Wagner began offering the course commonly known as MC510, "Signs, Wonders and Church Growth," with Wimber involved in practical ministry components. The course became exceptionally popular and controversial. It attempted to connect missiology, church growth, healing, deliverance, and charismatic practice in a formal theological-education setting. Fuller later suspended and reviewed aspects of the course, illustrating how difficult it was for evangelical institutions to determine what kind of evidence, oversight, and doctrinal boundaries should govern experiential claims (Glasser, 1986; Wagner, 1988).

The controversy was historically important because it showed that charismatic practice was no longer confined to marginal storefronts or revival tents. It had entered a major evangelical seminary and was being discussed as a question of mission methodology. The result was neither complete acceptance nor simple rejection. Instead, evangelicalism became a contested space in which continuationists and cessationists argued from Scripture, history, pastoral experience, and competing accounts of the apostolic age.

7.4 Power evangelism, healing, prophecy, and spiritual warfare

Wimber and Kevin Springer used the expression *power evangelism* for proclamation accompanied by an expectation of the Spirit's supernatural activity. The purpose, at its best, was missional rather than theatrical: signs were understood as witnesses to the kingdom rather than as entertainment or proof of the minister's greatness (Wimber & Springer, 1986). The Vineyard also developed practices of "ministry time" in which congregants could receive prayer after teaching or worship. This model became influential far beyond the Vineyard because it made charismatic ministry congregationally reproducible rather than dependent only on celebrity evangelists.

The same period saw intensified teaching on spiritual warfare. Christians had always believed in demonic opposition, but some Third Wave and later apostolic-prophetic teachers developed detailed practices involving territorial spirits, spiritual mapping, identificational repentance, and strategic intercession directed toward cities or regions. Some elements reflected clear biblical themes: believers are commanded to resist the devil, pray, stand in truth, and recognize spiritual conflict ([Ephesians 6:10-18](#); [James 4:7](#); [1 Peter 5:8-9](#)). Other practices extrapolated far beyond explicit apostolic instruction, especially where speculative hierarchies of territorial spirits were treated as necessary strategic knowledge.

7.5 The Kansas City prophetic stream and the Toronto Blessing

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Vineyard interacted with prophetic ministries from Kansas City, including figures later known collectively as the Kansas City Prophets. The relationship intensified Vineyard interest in prophecy while also producing controversies over prophetic accuracy, personal conduct, and accountability. Wimber attempted to impose boundaries and correction, but the episode demonstrated a recurring problem: once a movement normalizes specific personal revelations, it must decide how error, exaggeration, and failed prediction will be identified without suppressing legitimate spiritual gifts.

A second major controversy came through the revival that began in January 1994 at the Toronto Airport Vineyard in Canada after John and Carol Arnott invited the Vineyard pastor Randy Clark to minister. Meetings drew international visitors and became known for prolonged worship and unusual physical manifestations, including falling, shaking, intense laughter, and other ecstatic responses. Supporters interpreted the meetings as spiritual refreshing and renewal; critics questioned the biblical basis of specific manifestations and the attention given to them. In December 1995 the Association of Vineyard Churches severed its formal relationship with the Toronto congregation after disagreement over Vineyard norms and oversight. The church later became Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship and eventually Catch the Fire. Whatever judgment is made about particular manifestations, the event demonstrates the global speed of late twentieth-century charismatic diffusion: visitors,

videos, cassettes, conferences, and transnational ministry networks could carry a local revival pattern around the world within months (Beverley, 1996).

7.6 Brownsville/Pensacola: revivalism at the boundary of classical Pentecostalism and the Third Wave

A second internationally influential revival began on Father's Day 1995 at Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida, where pastor John Kilpatrick hosted the evangelist Steve Hill. What became known as the Brownsville Revival or Pensacola Outpouring continued through the second half of the 1990s and attracted visitors from the United States and abroad. Its public emphasis centered strongly on repentance, conversion, prayer, and renewed spiritual intensity, while services also included physical manifestations familiar from wider Pentecostal and charismatic revival culture. The event is historically useful because it occurred inside a classical Pentecostal denomination while participating in the transdenominational revival circuits of the 1990s (Huckins, 2014).

Brownsville therefore complicates any simple three-wave taxonomy. Institutionally it belonged to the Assemblies of God, but its revival culture overlapped with the international currents surrounding Toronto and other late-century renewal centers. Visitors carried testimonies and practices back to churches that had no formal relationship with Brownsville. This pattern reinforced the central argument of the chapter: by the 1990s, revival influence increasingly travelled through conferences, testimony, recordings, itinerant ministers, and relational networks rather than only through denominational channels.

Theologically, Brownsville also illustrates why claims of revival must be evaluated at more than one level. Calls to repentance, faith in Christ, prayer, holiness, and evangelism are directly consonant with the apostolic message ([Acts 2:37-42](#)). Reports of healing or unusual manifestations, however, require the same testing demanded elsewhere in the New Testament. Numerical response, emotional intensity, or the duration of meetings cannot substitute for durable fruit, truthful testimony, sound doctrine, and accountable pastoral practice. The biblical question is not whether a meeting is culturally Pentecostal but whether its message and fruit remain faithful to Christ and the apostolic Word.

7.7 Biblical evaluation of the Third Wave

The Third Wave recovered a point that cessationist cultures could neglect: the New Testament does not command churches to admire first-century gifts from a safe historical distance. It commands believers to desire spiritual gifts, pray for the sick, test prophecy, and expect God to work through the Spirit ([1 Corinthians 12:4-11](#); [1 Corinthians 14:1](#); [James 5:14-16](#)). The movement also usefully resisted the equation of supernatural ministry with one denominational pedigree or one initiation formula.

At the same time, Scripture never makes intensity of manifestation a test of truth. The Spirit glorifies Christ ([John 16:13-14](#)), produces holy fruit ([Galatians 5:22-25](#)), distributes gifts for the common good ([1 Corinthians 12:7](#)), and commands intelligible order in gathered worship ([1 Corinthians 14:26-33](#)). A phenomenon may be emotionally powerful and still require testing. A prophecy may be sincerely delivered and still be wrong. A healing ministry may include genuine answers to prayer and still contain exaggeration or theological error. The biblical posture is therefore neither cynical denial nor automatic reception, but active discernment.

Key-person profile. John Wimber (1934-1997)

Background	Evangelical convert, musician, church-growth practitioner, and pastor who moved from Quaker and Calvary Chapel settings into Vineyard leadership.
Historical role	Popularized healing prayer, ministry time, kingdom theology, and power evangelism within an evangelical-charismatic framework.
Genealogical significance	A central bridge from the Jesus Movement and church-growth world to Third Wave and network Christianity.
Doctrinal distinction	Accepted gifts and healing without requiring classical Pentecostal tongues-as-initial-evidence doctrine.

8. Word of Faith: Confession, Healing, and the Authority of the Believer

8.1 E. W. Kenyon and the disputed genealogy of faith teaching

Word of Faith theology did not begin in the 1960s, but the late twentieth century gave it global institutional reach. Essek William Kenyon, an early twentieth-century teacher associated with evangelical and divine-healing currents, wrote extensively about identification with Christ, the authority of the believer, healing, covenant rights, confession, and the creative or practical importance of words. Later critics argued that Kenyon borrowed heavily from New Thought or metaphysical religion. Other historians have challenged simple dependence theories and stressed his evangelical, Holiness, Higher Life, and healing contexts. The safest historical conclusion is that Kenyon's theology developed in a religious environment where evangelical healing teaching and metaphysical ideas both circulated, and that later Word of Faith teachers found his vocabulary unusually

useful. Genealogy should distinguish demonstrable textual influence from sweeping claims about a single hidden origin (Bowler, 2013; McConnell, 1988; Simmons, 1997).

The controversy matters because theological evaluation cannot be settled by genetic fallacy. A doctrine is not false merely because a teacher encountered an objectionable source, nor true merely because its language is biblical. The decisive question is whether the doctrine accurately interprets Scripture. Historical origins explain how an idea developed; they do not replace exegesis.

8.2 Kenneth E. Hagin and the institutionalization of "faith"

Kenneth E. Hagin became the most influential systematizer and distributor of Word of Faith teaching in the postwar period. His ministry emphasized healing, faith, confession, the believer's authority over demonic opposition, and the practical appropriation of biblical promises. Hagin began an independent ministry in the early 1960s, developed *The Word of Faith* magazine, held seminars and camp meetings, and founded the RHEMA Bible Training Center, which opened in 1974. Through books, cassettes, radio, conferences, and graduates, his language of faith circulated internationally (RHEMA Bible Church, n.d.).

The attraction of the message is understandable. It insisted that Christianity should involve trust in God's promises rather than resigned fatalism. It emphasized the believer's union with Christ, access to God, prayer, and resistance to fear. In contexts where Christians had been taught to view suffering as spiritually meritorious in itself or divine intervention as remote, Word of Faith teaching could sound like a recovery of biblical confidence.

Yet the teaching often moved from confidence to mechanism. "Positive confession" could imply that spoken words function almost as spiritual laws, that believers possess covenantal rights to health and success, or that negative speech itself creates defeat. Some teachers developed strong claims about Christ's atoning work, spiritual death, or the believer's identification with divine authority. Because the Word of Faith movement is decentralized, no single formulation can fairly be attributed to every teacher. The doctrinal family must be evaluated claim by claim rather than by caricature (Harrison, 2005).

8.3 Kenneth Copeland and the expansion of the faith-teaching network

Kenneth Copeland's ministry, begun in the late 1960s, became one of the largest media vehicles for Word of Faith teaching. Like other independent ministries, it relied not on denominational appointment but on broadcast, conferences, publishing, partner networks, and the perceived authority of the teacher. Copeland's career illustrates the structural shift that concerns this chapter: a minister can acquire transnational ecclesial influence without controlling a denomination or even a large network of formally affiliated local congregations.

This model multiplied rapidly because tapes, books, and later satellite television allowed teaching to be consumed independent of local pastoral supervision. The same believer might belong to a Baptist, Pentecostal, charismatic Catholic, or independent congregation while receiving daily theological formation from a media teacher. Denominational membership therefore ceased to predict doctrinal influence as reliably as it once had.

8.4 The strongest biblical claims and their limits

Word of Faith teachers correctly emphasize that biblical faith is not vague optimism. Faith trusts a truthful God, prays with confidence, resists the devil, and takes divine promises seriously. Jesus repeatedly commends faith, and the New Testament speaks of believers' authority in Christ and of prayer offered in faith ([Mark 11:22-24](#); [Luke 10:17-20](#); [James 5:15](#)). Christians should not be trained to expect that God never intervenes or that prayer is psychologically useful but causally empty.

The problem appears when faith is detached from God's sovereign will and the whole counsel of Scripture. Biblical prayer includes confident asking and humble submission: "if the Lord wills" is not unbelief but creaturely realism ([James 4:13-16](#); [1 John 5:14-15](#)). Paul could leave Trophimus sick ([2 Timothy 4:20](#)), advise Timothy medically ([1 Timothy 5:23](#)), and endure a weakness God did not remove despite repeated prayer ([2 Corinthians 12:7-10](#)). Words matter morally and relationally, but Scripture never teaches that human speech functions as an autonomous creative force equivalent to God's sovereign word. Confession must therefore mean agreeing with God's truth, not manipulating reality through verbal technique.

9. Prosperity Theology, Seed-Faith, and the Economics of Religious Media

9.1 From divine healing to material blessing

Prosperity theology emerged through the convergence of several streams rather than one founder. Pentecostal divine-healing teaching had already linked redemption to bodily well-being. Word of Faith teachers emphasized covenant promises and confession. Postwar American revivalism normalized fundraising through mass media. Consumer culture increasingly interpreted success through visible abundance. Televangelism created ministries with enormous operating costs and audiences responsive to direct appeals. Prosperity teaching brought these elements together by presenting material provision, health,

advancement, or financial increase as expected dimensions of divine blessing for faithful believers (Bowler, 2013; Coleman, 2000).

The category itself contains substantial variation. Some preachers teach little more than that God cares about material needs and may prosper believers so they can provide, give, and serve. Others imply that wealth is a predictable sign of faith, obedience, or anointing. Still others develop highly transactional systems in which donations are described as "seed" expected to return as multiplied financial harvest. A fair critique must distinguish these levels rather than treating every sermon on God's provision as prosperity theology.

9.2 Oral Roberts and "seed-faith"

Oral Roberts provides an important bridge from the healing revival to prosperity-oriented media religion. His early prominence came through healing campaigns, but his ministry later developed a theology of "seed-faith" in which giving was presented as sowing that could be linked with expectation of divine return. Roberts also built durable institutions, including a university and a major media ministry. His career demonstrates how healing revivalism could evolve from itinerant tent evangelism into a sophisticated educational, broadcast, and fundraising system (Harrell, 1975; Bowler, 2013).

Seed imagery is biblical, but context determines meaning. Scripture compares generosity to sowing and reaping and promises that God supplies resources for continued generosity ([2 Corinthians 9:6-11](#)). The passage, however, centers cheerful giving, sufficiency, thanksgiving, righteousness, and generosity, not a guaranteed mechanism for private enrichment. To turn the metaphor into a spiritual investment contract shifts the text from generosity toward acquisition.

9.3 Televangelism and the creation of an electronic religious public

Television radically altered the scale of charismatic ministry. Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network began in 1960; Trinity Broadcasting Network was founded by Paul and Jan Crouch in 1973; Oral Roberts, Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, Kenneth Copeland, and many others used television to bring preaching, prayer, testimony, music, and fundraising into homes. A viewer no longer had to attend a revival tent or denominational convention to enter a ministry's symbolic world (Trinity Broadcasting Network, n.d.). The screen created a form of intimacy between charismatic leader and remote audience.

Broadcast also changed economics. Television required studios, transmitters, satellite access, staff, production, and continuous funding. Appeals for donations were therefore not incidental to the medium. They became part of its religious rhythm. Supporters could be organized as "partners" who received magazines, letters, books, recordings, or access to special events. Partnership language could foster genuine missionary participation, but it could also blur the distinction between Christian giving and a commercial exchange in which spiritual benefit appears to be purchased.

Scandals in the late 1980s exposed the vulnerabilities of this model. Public controversies surrounding Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart involved different forms of misconduct, yet together they damaged the credibility of televangelism and demonstrated that media success could outpace accountability. The lesson was institutional as much as moral. Independent ministries with boards closely aligned to founders could accumulate extraordinary resources while lacking the layered checks present in some denominational systems. Denominations can also conceal abuse, but independence does not solve the problem of fallen human power.

9.4 Wealth, testimony, and the transformation of religious authority

Prosperity preaching changed the evidentiary logic of testimony. In classical conversion testimony, the central proof of grace was reconciliation with God and a transformed life. In healing revivalism, bodily recovery could function as evidence. In prosperity cultures, business success, debt cancellation, property acquisition, or upward mobility could become signs that a teaching "worked." The visible life of the preacher could then function as a theological exhibit. Luxury might be defended not despite prosperity doctrine but because it allegedly displayed the doctrine's truth.

This logic creates a serious biblical problem. The New Testament never identifies wealth as a reliable measure of divine approval. Jesus warns about the deceitfulness of wealth and the impossibility of serving God and money ([Matthew 6:19-24](#); [Mark 4:18-19](#)). Paul describes both abundance and need as circumstances in which contentment must be learned ([Philippians 4:11-13](#)) and warns teachers who imagine godliness as a means of financial gain ([1 Timothy 6:3-10](#)). The apostolic pattern includes generous patrons, poor saints, prosperous households, imprisoned missionaries, and suffering apostles. Material condition is therefore an unstable theological diagnostic.

9.5 Globalization and local adaptation

Prosperity theology became especially significant because it traveled well. Its promise that faith could address health, employment, family crisis, housing, education, spiritual opposition, and economic insecurity resonated in societies undergoing rapid urbanization and market transition. In Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia, prosperity preaching was not simply

copied from American television. Local pastors reinterpreted it through indigenous understandings of blessing, spiritual causation, deliverance, kinship obligation, entrepreneurship, and national aspiration (Coleman, 2000; Kalu, 2008).

The local adaptation can contain a genuine corrective. Mission Christianity sometimes proclaimed salvation in ways that seemed indifferent to material suffering, sickness, unemployment, or oppressive spiritual fears. Pentecostal and charismatic churches insisted that the gospel addresses embodied people in concrete crises. The error comes when holistic concern becomes a promise that faithful Christians are entitled to continuous wealth, health, or upward mobility. Scripture teaches God's fatherly provision and commands practical care for need, but it does not transform the cross into a guarantee of affluence before resurrection.

Table 3. Prosperity teaching: biblical concerns and common overextensions

Theme	Biblical affirmation	Common overextension	Sola Scriptura corrective
Provision	God knows material needs and may provide abundantly.	Material increase treated as an entitlement of faith.	Provision is received with gratitude; abundance and need are both possible Christian circumstances.
Giving	Generosity is commanded and God supplies resources for further generosity.	Donations treated as financial seed guaranteeing multiplied private return.	2 Corinthians 9 centers cheerful generosity, sufficiency, thanksgiving, and righteousness.
Healing	Churches should pray for the sick and expect God to act.	Non-healing blamed routinely on insufficient faith or confession.	The New Testament joins healing prayer with suffering, weakness, providence, and future resurrection.
Speech	Words reveal the heart, bless or harm others, and confess truth.	Human speech treated as an autonomous creative law that produces reality.	Confession agrees with God's truth; creaturely words never possess God's sovereign creative authority.
Success	Diligence, wisdom, stewardship, and productive work are commended.	Visible wealth or ministry scale treated as proof of divine favor.	Faithfulness, truth, holiness, and love are the biblical measures of ministry.

10. Megachurches, Church Growth, and the Seeker-Sensitive Turn

10.1 Megachurches are an organizational form, not one theological branch

The late twentieth-century megachurch revolution overlapped with charismatic expansion but should not be treated as its direct descendant. Large congregations existed before 1960, and many later megachurches were Baptist, Reformed, evangelical, Pentecostal, charismatic, or difficult to classify. What changed was the frequency and organizational sophistication with which very large churches operated as comprehensive religious institutions. They offered multiple worship services, specialized age and life-stage ministries, counseling, education, media production, bookstores, conferences, and professional staff structures. The congregation could function as a religious environment more immediately formative than the denomination to which it technically belonged (Thumma & Travis, 2007).

Several social changes favored this model. Suburbanization concentrated mobile middle-class populations around highways and large parking facilities. Consumer culture increased expectations for specialized services and high production quality. Advances in sound reinforcement and video allowed thousands to participate in one service. Church-growth theory encouraged leaders to study the social conditions under which congregations expand. The result was not simply "marketing the gospel" but a sustained attempt to remove unnecessary cultural obstacles to attendance, sometimes with impressive evangelistic results and sometimes at the cost of reducing church life to a portfolio of religious services.

10.2 Donald McGavran, Fuller, and church-growth theory

Donald A. McGavran's missionary work supplied the intellectual foundation for the modern Church Growth Movement. His 1955 book *The Bridges of God* argued that mission strategy should study how people actually enter Christian communities and should evaluate methods by whether they produce durable discipleship and congregational growth. At Fuller Theological Seminary, the School of World Mission became a major center for church-growth research. Arthur Glasser later described both the movement's influence and the criticisms it generated, including fears of pragmatism, numerical obsession, and insufficient theological depth (Glasser, 1986; McGavran, 1955).

Church-growth theory was not inherently charismatic. Its importance to this chapter lies in organizational convergence. Wimber moved directly through the Fuller church-growth world before becoming a leading charismatic figure. Wagner

connected church-growth missiology with signs and wonders. Megachurch pastors adopted research, demographic analysis, leadership training, and small-group systems while charismatic churches adopted similar growth techniques. By the 1990s, methods once associated with mission strategy had become part of a transdenominational repertoire.

10.3 Willow Creek and the seeker-sensitive model

Willow Creek Community Church, founded in the Chicago area in 1975 under Bill Hybels and colleagues, became the most influential example of the seeker-sensitive model. Its strategy distinguished between services designed to be accessible to religious seekers and other settings intended for deeper Christian formation. Contemporary music, drama, practical preaching, careful hospitality, and intentional attention to unchurched people became widely imitated. The Willow Creek Association later disseminated leadership and ministry models across denominational lines (Willow Creek Community Church, n.d.).

The strength of this approach was missional intentionality. Churches were forced to ask whether inherited customs served the gospel or merely served insiders' preferences. Paul himself could adapt cultural presentation without altering his message ([1 Corinthians 9:19-23](#)). The danger appears when attraction becomes the governing criterion. The New Testament never promises that apostolic preaching will be culturally comfortable, and Jesus allows hard teaching to drive away hearers rather than revising truth to preserve audience size ([John 6:60-69](#)). Contextualization is therefore legitimate only while the content, demands, and offense of the gospel remain intact.

10.4 Saddleback and purpose-driven organization

Rick Warren founded Saddleback Church in Southern California in 1980. Its later "purpose-driven" model organized church life around biblical purposes such as worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and mission. The church became one of the best-known examples of how a congregation could combine evangelical doctrine, organizational research, small groups, contemporary worship, and large-scale programming. Like Willow Creek, Saddleback's influence spread through books, conferences, training materials, and pastor networks rather than through direct denominational control (Saddleback Church, n.d.).

The significance for genealogy is that ministry models became exportable units. A local church could adopt Willow Creek programming, Saddleback small-group structures, Vineyard worship, Word of Faith confession language, and denominational doctrine simultaneously. This modularity weakened the explanatory power of denominational labels. By the late twentieth century, what Christians practiced could be shaped by multiple networks at once.

10.5 Market logic: a useful diagnosis that can become an oversimplification

Critics often describe megachurches as products of religious consumerism. The critique has force when churches treat attendees as customers, success as numerical market share, preaching as product differentiation, and pastors as brands. Yet market language can also oversimplify. Large congregations may sustain serious doctrine, costly missions, extensive charity, disciplined small groups, and robust pastoral care. Small churches can be consumeristic, and large churches can be sacrificial.

The more precise issue is what controls ministry decisions. Scripture allows prudent administration, contextual communication, strategic mission, and competent stewardship. It does not permit numerical growth, donor retention, media reach, or customer satisfaction to become tests of truth. A church may be organizationally excellent and spiritually compromised, or modest in scale and deeply faithful. The New Testament evaluates shepherds by truth, character, care for the flock, and accountability to Christ rather than by organizational size ([Acts 20:28-31](#); [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#); [1 Peter 5:1-4](#)).

11. Apostolic and Prophetic Networks: Restoration Claims Beyond Denominations

11.1 The return of "fivefold ministry" language

The late twentieth century saw a renewed claim that apostles and prophets should be restored as recognized governing ministries. Advocates commonly appealed to [Ephesians 4:11-16](#), where Christ gives apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the equipping of the saints. Some interpreted the passage to mean that all five ministries must continue as offices until the Church reaches mature unity. Latter Rain traditions had already used restorationist language of this kind, but the 1980s and 1990s saw the idea reappear in independent charismatic networks.

The term apostle could mean several different things. In some churches it referred broadly to a pioneering missionary or church planter. In others it designated a translocal leader who provided oversight to a family of churches. In stronger versions it implied unusual revelatory authority, governmental rank, or a restored office comparable in function to New Testament apostles. These meanings should not be conflated. The biblical question depends on which claim is actually being made.

11.2 C. Peter Wagner and the language of a "New Apostolic Reformation"

By the late 1990s, C. Peter Wagner was using the expression New Apostolic Reformation to describe what he saw as a major restructuring of Protestant Christianity. His 1998 edited volume *The New Apostolic Churches* presented congregations and networks characterized by strong senior leadership, contemporary worship, charismatic gifts, flexible structures, and a reduced dependence on inherited denominational bureaucracy. Wagner's later writings expanded the category to include apostles, prophets, spiritual warfare, and social transformation (Wagner, 1998).

The term must be handled carefully. It does not name one denomination with a universally accepted creed, membership roll, or headquarters. Some leaders whom scholars or critics classify within a broader apostolic-prophetic milieu do not use the label for themselves. Others accept parts of Wagner's framework but not all of it. A historical genealogy should therefore speak of apostolic-prophetic networks and of the NAR as a disputed analytical and self-descriptive category, not as a single secret organization directing all charismatic Christianity (Christerson & Flory, 2017).

11.3 Relational authority and translocal oversight

The attraction of apostolic networks was partly organizational. Denominational bureaucracies could be slow, centralized, or disconnected from local innovation. Networks promised relationship rather than bureaucracy: churches voluntarily aligned with a trusted leader, shared conferences, received mentoring, pooled mission initiatives, and adopted common ministry values without necessarily transferring property or legal control. In rapidly changing urban and transnational environments, this flexibility could accelerate church planting and leadership development.

Yet relational governance can hide power as easily as it can humanize it. Formal denominations usually have constitutions, appeal procedures, published credentialing rules, and identifiable disciplinary jurisdictions, even when they use them badly. A network centered on a charismatic apostle may possess fewer transparent mechanisms for correction. If access, ordination, recognition, and prophecy flow through one leader's relationships, dissent can be recast as rebellion against spiritual authority. The absence of bureaucracy is not the absence of hierarchy.

11.4 Prophets, personal revelation, and the problem of error

Late twentieth-century prophetic networks often distinguished New Testament prophecy from canonical Scripture by arguing that contemporary prophetic impressions are subordinate, partial, and subject to testing. This distinction is more careful than treating every prophecy as inerrant revelation. It recognizes [1 Corinthians 14:29](#), where prophetic speech is to be evaluated, and [1 Thessalonians 5:19-22](#), which combines openness to prophecy with testing.

The practical difficulty is that movements have not always maintained the theological distinction consistently. A prophecy presented with divine certainty can direct marriages, relocations, finances, church decisions, or political expectations even if leaders later concede that contemporary prophecy is fallible. The stronger the rhetoric of "God told me," the greater the moral burden to avoid manipulating conscience. Scripture never grants a later prophet the right to add binding doctrine to the apostolic faith, and even supernatural signs cannot legitimate a message that contradicts God's revealed truth ([Deuteronomy 13:1-5](#); [Galatians 1:8-9](#); [1 John 4:1-6](#)).

11.5 Spiritual mapping and territorial warfare

Some apostolic-prophetic networks developed practices known as spiritual mapping, in which researchers or intercessors attempted to identify territorial spiritual powers, historical sins, occult sites, or patterns of bondage associated with a city or region. Advocates often connected these practices to Daniel's language of angelic "princes," Jesus' authority over demons, and Paul's teaching on principalities and powers. Strategic prayer, repentance, and evangelism were then organized in relation to the perceived spiritual geography.

Scripture certainly teaches a real spiritual conflict and commands vigilant prayer. What it does not clearly provide is an apostolic method for discovering the names, ranks, territorial boundaries, or historical legal claims of demons in order to evangelize a city. The danger is epistemological: speculative information acquired through impressions, dreams, or secondary narratives can be treated as strategic revelation without a clear biblical warrant. The apostolic method of mission emphasizes prayer, proclamation, holiness, suffering, reasoned persuasion, church formation, and resistance to demonic deception. Any additional methodology must remain subordinate to those explicit instructions.

TWO AUTHORITY ARCHITECTURES

Ideal types for comparison, not moral verdicts

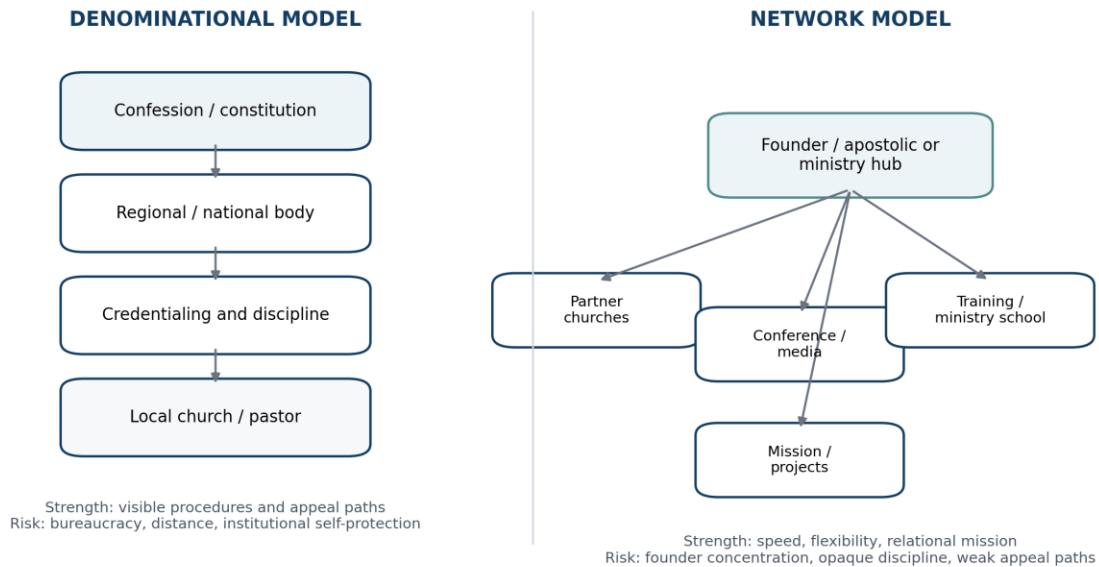


Figure 2. Denominational and network authority architectures compared.

Note. These are ideal types. Either model can be accountable or abusive; the key difference is where authority, credentials, discipline, and appeal pathways are located.

12. Independent Ministries and Network Christianity

12.1 Authority without a denomination

The proliferation of independent ministries was not merely a theological development. It was a legal and technological one. A ministry could incorporate as a nonprofit organization, purchase airtime, publish books, host conferences, ordain associates, build a donor database, travel internationally, and establish partner churches without becoming a denomination in the traditional sense. The leader's authority might be recognized because of preaching, healing, prophecy, organizational success, or personal mentoring rather than because a synod or bishop appointed him.

This structure could solve real problems. Missionaries, evangelists, campus ministries, humanitarian organizations, and specialized teaching ministries often need freedom from denominational machinery. The New Testament itself contains itinerant workers and translocal apostolic teams. The existence of a parachurch ministry is not therefore a biblical defect. The problem arises when an independent ministry begins functioning as a church while avoiding the accountability Scripture places on local church leadership and gathered Christian life.

12.2 Conferences, publishing, cassettes, and the formation of translocal publics

Before social media, the cassette tape was one of the most important technologies of charismatic globalization. Sermons and conference sessions could be duplicated cheaply and carried across borders. Books translated teachings into durable doctrinal systems. Magazines maintained donor and follower relationships. Large conferences created temporary gatherings in which people from many denominations shared worship, vocabulary, and ministry practices. Television added a visual layer of personal familiarity.

These media created what may be called translocal publics: communities of attention that were not formal churches but nevertheless shared teachers, testimonies, music, and theological assumptions. A Christian could be locally Presbyterian, nationally evangelical, musically Vineyard-influenced, eschatologically dispensational, and financially shaped by a Word of Faith broadcaster. This layered identity is one reason late twentieth-century Christianity cannot be mapped adequately by institutional lineage alone.

12.3 Informal ordination and credential portability

Network Christianity also changed ordination. Historic churches normally locate ordination within a recognized structure: a bishop, presbytery, conference, synod, association, or local congregation examines and commissions a minister. Independent networks could instead recognize ministry through a senior leader's personal endorsement, a ministry school, a conference

relationship, or reciprocal credentialing among aligned organizations. This flexibility enabled rapid deployment but could reduce theological examination and disciplinary clarity.

The New Testament gives no single later denominational constitution, but it does give nonnegotiable principles. Leaders are to be tested, morally qualified, doctrinally sound, and publicly accountable ([1 Timothy 3:1-13](#); [Titus 1:5-9](#)). No amount of gifting compensates for disqualifying character. No prophetic call excuses false teaching. The more a network depends on personal charisma rather than stable procedures, the more deliberately it must build transparent forms of accountability if it is to avoid reproducing the abuses it criticizes in denominations.

12.4 From institution to platform

By 2000, the outline of a new religious economy was clear. Denominations still mattered, but influence increasingly belonged to platforms: a conference, television network, worship label, Bible school, publishing imprint, megachurch, revival center, or apostolic network. Platforms could rise faster than denominations because they did not need to negotiate every layer of representative governance. They could also decline faster because they were often tied to one founder or media ecology.

This shift helps explain the explosion of independent churches. A pastor no longer needed a denominational mission board to find models, training, music, sermons, donors, or transnational connections. He could assemble these resources through networks. In contexts where established churches were associated with colonialism, ethnic politics, bureaucracy, or spiritual stagnation, independence could symbolize local agency and renewal. Yet the same freedom could produce fragmentation, personality cults, financial opacity, and doctrinal improvisation.

Table 4. Denomination and network as contrasting organizational models

Dimension	Traditional denomination	Independent network form	Analytical caution
Membership	Defined by formal congregation and denominational affiliation.	Participation may be relational, event-based, digital, or ministry-centered.	Many Christians inhabit both models simultaneously.
Authority	Constitution, synod, bishop, presbytery, conference, or association.	Founder, apostolic leader, advisory team, or relational hub.	Formal structure does not guarantee accountability; informality does not eliminate hierarchy.
Credentials	Published procedures and institutional ordination.	Ministry school, personal commissioning, network recognition, or reciprocal credentials.	Biblical testing of character and doctrine is required in either model.
Doctrine	Usually stated through confession or denominational standards.	Often communicated through founder teaching, conferences, books, and shared ministry values.	A network may be doctrinally coherent without a creed, but boundaries can be harder to identify.
Discipline	Potential appeal through identifiable institutional levels.	Correction may depend on relationships close to the network leader.	Transparency and independent review become especially important where founder authority is strong.
Expansion	Church planting through boards, districts, mission agencies.	Rapid replication through partnerships, conferences, media, and personal networks.	Speed can amplify both effective mission and untested error.

13. Global South Expansion: Charismatic Christianity Becomes Polycentric

13.1 Why "globalization" must not mean American export alone

By the final decades of the twentieth century, the demographic and cultural center of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity was shifting decisively toward Latin America, Africa, and Asia. This growth cannot responsibly be narrated as a one-way export from the United States. American missionaries, books, Bible schools, television programs, and funding were important, but local Christians selected, translated, resisted, and recombined what they received. Indigenous revivals and older Pentecostal traditions already existed in many regions. New churches emerged because local leaders addressed urbanization, illness, family instability, spiritual fear, economic insecurity, migration, and political change in idioms that made immediate sense within their societies (Anderson, 2014; Kalu, 2008; Miller et al., 2013).

The word polycentric is therefore more accurate than diffusion from one center. Seoul, Lagos, Accra, Johannesburg, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Manila, Singapore, and numerous other cities became centers that sent missionaries, media, music, theological education, and church models outward. By the 1990s, the flow of influence was increasingly

multidirectional. African pastors learned from American televangelists, but American and European churches also learned worship, prayer, revival, and mission strategies from African, Asian, and Latin American Christians.

13.2 Latin America: from Pentecostal minority to major religious force

Latin America offers one of the clearest examples of the scale of late twentieth-century change. Classical Pentecostalism had been present for decades in countries such as Chile and Brazil, but the 1970s-1990s saw the rise of new independent and neo-Pentecostal churches emphasizing healing, deliverance, prosperity, media, and aggressive evangelism. Brazil's Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, founded in Rio de Janeiro in 1977 by Edir Macedo and associates, became a particularly visible example of a locally generated neo-Pentecostal institution that combined deliverance, strong leadership, mass media, and a highly expansionist organizational model (Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, n.d.).

The Brazilian case shows why genealogy must distinguish influence from descent. The Universal Church belongs to the wider Pentecostal-charismatic environment, but it is not simply an overseas branch of an American Word of Faith denomination. Its development drew on Brazilian Pentecostal history, local religious competition, urban social conditions, media opportunity, deliverance practice, and entrepreneurial leadership. Similar caution is necessary across Latin America. Indigenous Pentecostal denominations, Catholic charismatic communities, independent evangelists, and imported ministry networks interacted in different proportions from country to country.

Charismatic renewal also affected Roman Catholicism in Latin America, creating an important internal Catholic response to Pentecostal growth. Catholic prayer groups adopted lively worship, healing prayer, lay testimony, and evangelistic forms while remaining sacramentally Catholic. The resulting religious field was not a simple Protestant-versus-Catholic contest. Pentecostal styles crossed the confessional boundary even as doctrinal differences remained.

Argentina illustrates a different pattern of local innovation. During the 1980s, evangelists such as Carlos Annacondia helped normalize healing and liberacion, or deliverance, as public evangelistic practices within a rapidly changing evangelical field. Scholarship on this period shows that these methods were not merely imported North American formulas; they were adapted to Argentine popular religion and then became models that circulated beyond Argentina. The case is significant because it reverses a common assumption about influence: Latin America was not only receiving charismatic techniques but also generating practices that other renewal movements would study and imitate (Marostica, 2011).

13.3 Africa: continuity with older spiritual worlds and new urban Christianities

African Pentecostal and charismatic growth accelerated in the same period, but its genealogy varied widely. Some churches descended from mission-established Pentecostal denominations. Others developed from African Initiated Churches, independent revivals, student movements, evangelical ministries, or urban prayer fellowships. By the 1970s-1990s, a new generation of African charismatic leaders increasingly built congregations around university-educated youth, urban professionals, media, deliverance, healing, prosperity, leadership training, and transnational mission. The detailed African history belongs to the next chapter, but its relevance here is structural: Africa became a generator, not merely a recipient, of charismatic forms (Kalu, 2008).

African charismatic Christianity often addressed questions that older missionary Protestantism had handled awkwardly or dismissively: fear of witchcraft, spiritual causation, infertility, healing, dreams, ancestral obligations, family conflict, and the relation between visible and invisible worlds. Pentecostal deliverance offered a Christian framework that took spiritual fear seriously while directing believers toward the authority of Christ. Where this displaced recourse to occult practitioners or fear-based ritual, it could function as a profound pastoral reform. Where it developed into obsessive demonology, monetized deliverance, or speculative claims about curses, it could create new forms of bondage.

Prosperity teaching also acquired specifically African forms. In settings marked by structural poverty, unemployment, corruption, and limited social mobility, messages of divine possibility could restore dignity and initiative. Churches often built schools, businesses, media organizations, welfare ministries, and networks of mutual help. Yet prosperity rhetoric could also individualize systemic suffering and imply that the poor remain poor because they lack faith, have failed to give, or are spiritually blocked. Such conclusions are difficult to reconcile with the Bible's concern for unjust structures, exploitation, generosity, and the righteous poor.

The post-independence African resurgence also produced identifiable indigenous centers of influence. In Nigeria, the student and youth revivals of the 1960s and 1970s fed new urban ministries, and figures such as Benson Idahosa became symbols of a generation that combined evangelism, healing, education, media, and African missionary ambition. During the 1980s and 1990s, Nigerian and Ghanaian ministries increasingly sent preachers, books, music, and church-planting models across borders, while South African charismatic and faith networks developed their own institutional forms. These examples reinforce Ogbu Kalu's argument that the modern African charismatic resurgence should be read as an indigenous missionary cycle shaped by decolonization and local agency, not as the late arrival of an American religious franchise (Kalu, 2008).

13.4 Asia: megachurch scale, prayer movements, and contextual adaptation

Asia likewise became a major center of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity. South Korea's Yoido Full Gospel Church, shaped by David Yonggi Cho, became an emblem of large-scale Pentecostal church growth, cell organization, prayer, healing, and contextualized ministry in a rapidly modernizing society. The church's immense scale drew global attention to the possibility that Pentecostal spirituality could coexist with sophisticated administration and urban modernity rather than remaining a marginal or rural form.

Across the Philippines, India, Singapore, Indonesia, and other Asian contexts, charismatic Christianity developed through Catholic renewal, classical Pentecostal missions, indigenous churches, campus movements, independent ministries, and megachurch networks. In some settings it interacted with religious pluralism and minority status; in others it operated in rapidly expanding urban economies. Theologies of healing and spiritual warfare often addressed local cosmologies, while contemporary worship and English-language media facilitated transnational connection.

The result by 2000 was not a uniform "global charismatic culture" but a family resemblance across many contexts: expectation of the Spirit's immediate activity, lay participation, healing prayer, adaptable worship, strong leadership, intensive evangelism, and readiness to use modern media. These traits could exist inside Catholic parishes, Pentecostal denominations, evangelical megachurches, or independent apostolic networks.

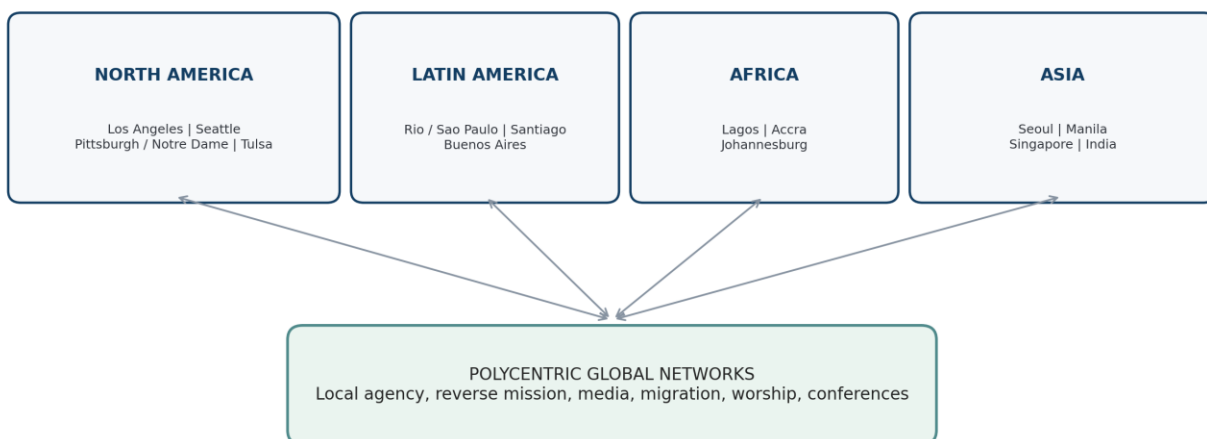
13.5 Demographic significance and the difficulty of counting

Counting Pentecostals and charismatics is methodologically difficult because the categories overlap and many charismatics remain members of non-Pentecostal churches. Later global surveys therefore use the broader category renewalist for classical Pentecostals and charismatics. A major Pew Forum survey published in 2006, just beyond this chapter's endpoint, found large renewalist populations across countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the United States and described Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity as one of the fastest-growing segments of world Christianity (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2006).

Those numbers should not be projected mechanically backward onto 2000, but they confirm the trajectory already unmistakable at the century's end. Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity had become a global family whose numerical strength, institutional creativity, and cultural influence could no longer be described as a marginal American phenomenon.

SELECTED HUBS IN THE GLOBAL CHARISMATIC EXPANSION

Representative centers and flows, c. 1960-2000



This schematic identifies representative hubs, not exclusive origins or one-directional diffusion.

Figure 3. Selected hubs in the global charismatic expansion, c. 1960-2000.

Note. The schematic identifies representative centers and multidirectional flows. It is not a map of exclusive origins and does not reduce indigenous movements to imported North Atlantic forms.

Table 5. Selected regional patterns in charismatic expansion before 2000

Region	Representative developments	Localizing dynamics	Genealogical caution
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Region	Representative developments	Localizing dynamics	Genealogical caution
Latin America	Classical Pentecostal growth; Catholic charismatic renewal; Argentine healing/deliverance revivalism; Brazilian and other neo-Pentecostal churches; media ministries.	Urbanization, religious competition, healing, deliverance, indigenous leadership, television.	Do not treat regional movements as simple subsidiaries of U.S. ministries.
Africa	Mission Pentecostalism; indigenous revivals; African Initiated churches; post-independence student and urban charismatic movements; prosperity and media ministries.	Spiritual warfare, healing, youth and professional networks, media, local theological agency.	Ancient and indigenous African Christianities predate modern imported Pentecostal forms.
Asia	Korean megachurch and prayer movements; Philippine Catholic and Protestant renewal; Indian and Southeast Asian charismatic networks.	Minority contexts, urban modernity, cell structures, healing, transnational English-language media.	Regional histories differ sharply; no single Asian charismatic genealogy exists.
North Atlantic	Historic Protestant and Catholic renewals; FGBMFI and Fountain Trust networks; Jesus Movement; Shepherding controversy; Vineyard; Word of Faith; megachurch and media networks.	Postwar mobility, youth culture, institutional decline, broadcasting, publishing, conferences.	Not all later global movements descend directly from North American renewal centers.

14. By 2000: Denominational Boundaries Become Porous

The Christian world at the end of the twentieth century was still denominational, but denominational identity no longer contained religious practice as neatly as it once had. A Catholic charismatic and an Assemblies of God member might share worship songs and language about healing while disagreeing fundamentally on church authority and sacraments. A Baptist megachurch might practice contemporary worship and small-group ministry learned from charismatic sources while remaining cessationist. An independent African church might combine classical Pentecostal theology, Word of Faith vocabulary, local deliverance practice, and a transnational apostolic network. A Vineyard congregation might identify as evangelical and charismatic while rejecting Pentecostal initial-evidence doctrine.

This porosity was intensified by church switching. In modern urban societies, believers could move between congregations more easily than in parish-based or state-church systems. Migration disrupted inherited ecclesial loyalties. Interdenominational universities, conferences, music festivals, mission organizations, and media ministries exposed Christians to traditions beyond their own. A person's functional theology could therefore change before formal membership did.

Worship was one of the strongest carriers of this convergence. Vineyard music, Jesus Movement-derived contemporary worship, Pentecostal praise, and later worship ministries circulated through recordings and songbooks. Churches often received a worship culture before they received the theology that originally surrounded it. This could create genuine common Christian language focused on Christ, Scripture, prayer, and praise. It could also allow theological assumptions to travel unnoticed through lyrics and ministry practices.

Leadership culture likewise converged. Pastors across traditions attended the same leadership conferences, read the same church-growth books, used similar small-group structures, and watched the same broadcasters. The denominational seminary was no longer the only center of pastoral formation. A conference platform or bestselling book could influence more ministers in a year than a denominational curriculum influenced in a decade.

The phrase post-denominational gained currency in this environment, but it can mislead if it suggests that denominations disappeared. They did not. Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Methodist, Adventist, Pentecostal, and other structures continued to possess property, ordain clergy, sponsor education, and define doctrine. What changed was the monopoly of those structures over Christian identity and influence. Network affiliation became an additional axis of belonging.

15. Why the Explosion Happened: Deeper Causes and Immediate Mechanisms

The developments from 1960 to 2000 cannot be explained by theology alone. Their immediate spiritual claims interacted with large social transformations. Urbanization placed millions of people in rapidly changing cities where inherited village, parish, and denominational bonds were weakened. Migration created religious markets in which congregations competed for people no longer tied to ancestral institutions. Expanding higher education produced mobile young adults receptive to campus fellowships and new worship forms. Postwar consumer culture familiarized people with voluntary choice among institutions, while distrust of bureaucracy made flexible ministries attractive.

Media was equally decisive. Radio had enlarged revivalism, but television gave religious authority a face. Cassettes made sermons portable. Air travel enabled transcontinental conferences. Desktop publishing and direct mail reduced the cost of sustaining niche religious publics. Satellite distribution connected churches across borders. By the late 1990s, websites and email were beginning to create the infrastructure of digital religion. The doctrine of spiritual gifts did not cause these technologies, but charismatic movements used them with exceptional agility because testimony, music, healing prayer, and personality were readily mediated.

Institutional dissatisfaction also mattered. Mainline churches in Europe and North America faced membership decline, theological conflict, and questions about relevance. Some Christians experienced charismatic renewal as a recovery of supernatural faith within institutions perceived as overly bureaucratic or intellectually domesticated. Conversely, Pentecostals who had become denominationally settled could find Third Wave or independent ministries attractive because they promised spontaneity that older Pentecostal institutions seemed to have lost.

Theologically, the decisive driver was restorationist expectation. Many charismatics believed that the gifts described in Acts and 1 Corinthians belonged to ordinary Christian life and had been neglected or suppressed. Word of Faith teachers believed Christians had failed to exercise covenant authority. Apostolic-prophetic networks believed Ephesians 4 ministries had been incompletely restored. Seeker-sensitive churches believed inherited forms obstructed evangelism. Each movement therefore contained an implicit narrative of loss and recovery.

That pattern explains both creativity and fragmentation. Once a group believes it has rediscovered a neglected biblical reality, inherited structures can appear optional or obstructive. New institutions form around the recovered emphasis. Over time, those institutions develop their own traditions, and another generation may criticize them for losing the original vitality. The twentieth century did not invent this cycle; it accelerated it through media, mobility, and entrepreneurial organization.

16. Major Doctrinal Fault Lines

16.1 Spiritual gifts: continuation, cessation, and the problem of universal formulas

The most obvious dispute concerned whether miraculous or revelatory gifts continue. Classical Pentecostals, charismatics, and Third Wave Christians answered yes, though they differed over how gifts relate to conversion and Spirit baptism. Cessationists argued that some gifts were uniquely associated with apostles and the foundational period of revelation. The debate cannot be settled merely by citing experience, because experiences require interpretation. Nor can it be settled by historical decline alone, because absence or rarity does not prove divine prohibition.

The New Testament repeatedly presents gifts as the Spirit's distribution for the edification of the body and commands congregations to desire, regulate, and test them ([1 Corinthians 12:4-11](#); [1 Corinthians 14:1-5](#); [1 Peter 4:10-11](#)). No text explicitly states that all gifts of healing, prophecy, tongues, or miracles will cease at the death of the apostles. At the same time, the apostolic age is unique because the apostles bear foundational, eyewitness, and revelatory authority ([Ephesians 2:19-20](#); [2 Corinthians 12:12](#)). A continuationist reading is strongest when it distinguishes continuing gifts from the unrepeatable authority of Christ's commissioned apostolic witnesses.

16.2 Healing: prayerful expectation versus guaranteed outcome

Charismatic Christianity restored healing prayer to churches that had sometimes relegated it to the apostolic past. This recovery accords with [James 5:14-16](#) and the New Testament's consistent witness that God may heal. The error arises when healing is made mechanically guaranteed in the present age or when the sick are blamed for insufficient faith. Jesus and the apostles do not build a pastoral system in which every non-healing proves unbelief. The New Testament expects both divine intervention and Christian endurance in weakness.

Biblical healing therefore belongs within eschatological tension. Christ's resurrection guarantees the final redemption of the body, but believers still groan while awaiting adoption's bodily consummation ([Romans 8:18-25](#)). Healing now can be a sign of the kingdom; resurrection will be its universal bodily fulfillment. This framework protects prayer from unbelieving resignation and protects sufferers from theological accusation.

16.3 Prophecy: genuine gift, fallible impression, or competing revelation?

Charismatic traditions developed several models of prophecy. Some speak of Spirit-prompted speech that must be weighed and may contain human imperfection. Others use stronger language that makes prophecy practically indistinguishable from direct divine instruction. The difference is not semantic. If a person can bind another's conscience by saying "God told me," the functional authority of the claim approaches revelation regardless of formal disclaimers.

Sola Scriptura requires a firm boundary. Scripture is the final written norm by which every later claim is tested. The Spirit cannot contradict the Word he inspired. Contemporary guidance may be real, but it must never generate new doctrine, override biblical commands, or acquire canonical status. The Berean pattern remains relevant: claims are examined by the Scriptures ([Acts 17:11](#)).

16.4 Prosperity: divine provision versus entitlement

The prosperity controversy concerns not whether God provides, but how his provision is interpreted. Scripture contains genuine promises of God's care, celebrates work and generosity, and includes believers with substantial resources. It also contains righteous poverty, persecution, famine, imprisonment, martyrdom, and apostolic suffering. Any theology that turns wealth into a reliable index of faith ignores this canonical diversity.

The biblical center is stewardship rather than entitlement. Believers are taught to seek God's kingdom, work honestly, provide for households, share with the needy, support gospel ministry, and cultivate contentment ([Matthew 6:25-34](#); [Ephesians 4:28](#); [1 Timothy 6:6-19](#)). The promise of the New Testament is not luxury but the presence of Christ, sufficient grace, resurrection hope, and a Father who knows what his children need.

16.5 Apostolic authority: missionary function versus foundational office

The word apostle in the New Testament has a range of uses. The Twelve and Paul possess a unique foundational authority grounded in Christ's commissioning and, in Paul's case, encounter with the risen Christ. Other messengers can be described more broadly as apostles or commissioned representatives. This lexical range permits Christians to use apostolic language for missionary sending in a secondary sense. It does not establish that later leaders possess the doctrinal authority of Paul or the Twelve.

The decisive theological boundary is therefore functional. If a modern "apostle" means a pioneer, missionary, church planter, or translocal servant whose teaching is judged by Scripture, the term can be defended as a secondary usage. If it means a leader whose revelation, governmental decree, or personal authority binds churches in a way comparable to the foundational apostles, the claim exceeds the New Testament warrant. Paul himself subjects even angelic messages to the already-delivered gospel ([Galatians 1:8-9](#)).

16.6 Sacramental-charismatic synthesis

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal demonstrates that charismatic gifts do not automatically produce Protestant doctrine. A Catholic can speak in tongues and remain committed to papal primacy, sacramental priesthood, Eucharistic sacrifice, Marian devotion, and magisterial authority. This fact is historically important because it refutes the idea that spiritual gifts carry their own complete theological interpretation.

From a Sola Scriptura perspective, charismatic experience must therefore be treated as evidentially limited. An answered prayer does not validate an entire ecclesial system. A genuine gift does not certify every doctrine held by the person exercising it. In Corinth, believers could possess remarkable gifts and still require extensive correction in doctrine, morality, worship, and leadership ([1 Corinthians 1:4-11](#); [1 Corinthians 3:1-4](#)). The presence of gifts is a reason for gratitude, not a substitute for doctrinal testing.

17. Biblical-Theological Assessment: Welcoming the Spirit Without Creating a Second Canon

17.1 What charismatic Christianity rightly recovered

A fair assessment must begin by acknowledging genuine recoveries. The charismatic movement reminded large parts of Christianity that the Holy Spirit is not an abstract doctrine. Prayer should expect God's action. Lay believers have gifts for ministry. Worship may include spontaneous participation. The sick should be prayed for. Mission depends on divine empowerment. Christian life should not be reduced to institutional membership, inherited ritual, or intellectual assent. In churches where formalism had eclipsed expectancy, these were substantial corrections.

The movement also recovered the participatory character of the gathered church. Paul's image of the body assumes that ministry is distributed rather than monopolized ([1 Corinthians 12:12-27](#)). His instruction that "each one" may bring something

for edification in gathered worship does not eliminate leadership, but it does resist a model in which the congregation is only an audience ([1 Corinthians 14:26](#)). Charismatic prayer groups, small groups, and ministry teams often created space for testimony, intercession, mutual care, and lay initiative that highly clericalized churches had neglected.

A third recovery was missionary confidence. Pentecostal and charismatic churches often planted congregations rapidly, empowered ordinary believers to evangelize, translated worship into local cultural forms, and prayed in concrete dependence on God. Their growth cannot be explained solely by supernatural claims; social networks and organizational flexibility matter. Yet the missionary energy itself is deeply consonant with the apostolic commission ([Matthew 28:18-20](#); [Acts 1:8](#)).

17.2 Experience must remain interpreted by Scripture

The central theological danger of charismatic Christianity is not experience itself. Christianity is irreducibly experiential: believers repent, trust Christ, receive the Spirit, pray, suffer, rejoice, and know God's fatherly care. The danger is granting experience self-authenticating authority. Visions, impressions, tongues, healings, prophetic words, dreams, and unusual manifestations are not exempt from biblical judgment because they are vivid.

Scripture itself supplies this rule. The Thessalonians are told not to despise prophecies and also to test everything ([1 Thessalonians 5:19-22](#)). John commands believers to test the spirits because false prophets exist ([1 John 4:1](#)). Jesus warns that impressive works performed in his name do not by themselves establish that a worker belongs to him ([Matthew 7:21-23](#)). The most charismatic biblical posture is therefore one of open but rigorous discernment.

17.3 The sufficiency of the apostolic deposit

The Church is built on the once-for-all gospel delivered through Christ's commissioned apostles, not on an indefinitely expanding chain of equivalent revelations. Jude speaks of "the faith" delivered to the saints, and Paul instructs Timothy to guard the entrusted pattern of sound teaching ([Jude 3](#); [2 Timothy 1:13-14](#)). This does not require denying all divine guidance or contemporary prophecy. It requires denying any later revelation the right to revise the apostolic gospel or create binding doctrine beyond Scripture.

A useful distinction is between illumination and revelation. The Spirit illumines Scripture, convicts believers, guides providentially, distributes gifts, and may bring particular applications to mind. But the Church does not need a new apostolic canon to know who God is, what the gospel is, how salvation is received, what holiness requires, or what hope Christ has promised. When a movement's survival depends on accepting a founder's special revelation, end-time office, or private interpretive key, it has moved beyond ordinary charismatic renewal toward a competing authority structure.

17.4 Money, ministry, and the apostolic pattern

The explosive growth of media ministries makes financial ethics unavoidable. The New Testament permits ministers to receive material support ([1 Corinthians 9:3-14](#)) and commands generosity toward teachers and the needy. It also condemns greed, manipulation, and the use of godliness for gain. Peter rejects the purchase of spiritual power ([Acts 8:18-23](#)); Paul renounces peddling God's word for profit ([2 Corinthians 2:17](#)); elders must not be greedy for money ([1 Timothy 3:3](#); [1 Peter 5:2](#)).

Accordingly, fundraising is not inherently unspiritual, but it must be transparent, truthful, voluntary, and free from promises that commodify divine blessing. A ministry that implies a donation will purchase healing, prophetic access, protection, or guaranteed financial return contradicts the gratuitous character of grace. Leaders whose lifestyle depends on donor sacrifice have a special obligation to model contentment and accountability.

17.5 Leadership: gifts under character, not character excused by gifts

Charismatic cultures are especially vulnerable to excusing misconduct because a leader appears powerfully gifted. Scripture reverses that priority. The qualifications for overseers emphasize character, household integrity, self-control, hospitality, and doctrinal reliability rather than public charisma ([1 Timothy 3:1-7](#); [Titus 1:5-9](#)). Gifts are real, but they are not proof of maturity. Corinth possessed gifts and immaturity simultaneously.

The Shepherding controversy of the 1970s supplies a concrete historical stress test for this principle. Its leaders were trying to solve genuine problems of atomized spirituality and weak discipleship, yet the cure became harmful where spiritual counsel acquired coercive force over ordinary decisions and where appeal pathways were unclear. Later network movements did not simply repeat Shepherding, but the episode established a durable lesson: informality is not accountability, relationship is not immunity from review, and claims of spiritual fatherhood do not enlarge the authority Christ grants to shepherds. The more personal a governance system becomes, the more explicit its safeguards must be.

This principle must govern both denominations and networks. Formal ordination does not guarantee holiness. Nor does independent anointing excuse the absence of accountability. The New Testament pattern combines recognized leaders with

plurality, testing, correction, and mutual responsibility. A healthy network will therefore build structures capable of correcting its founders rather than structures that merely transmit their authority.

17.6 Unity in the Spirit and unity in truth

Charismatic renewal created extraordinary ecumenical relationships. Christians who had inherited centuries of suspicion prayed together, read Scripture together, and discovered shared faith in Christ. This can be a genuine expression of the unity for which Jesus prayed ([John 17:20-23](#)) and the fellowship of the Spirit Paul commands believers to maintain ([Ephesians 4:1-6](#)).

Yet the same passage in Ephesians that celebrates one body and one Spirit also speaks of one faith and of maturity that resists every wind of doctrine ([Ephesians 4:4-16](#)). Biblical unity is not achieved by treating doctrinal contradiction as irrelevant. The correct goal is neither sectarian hostility nor experiential relativism. It is unity in truth, humility, love, and fidelity to Christ.

Table 6. Biblical-theological assessment of the period's major fault lines

Issue	Biblical affirmation	Boundary requiring discernment	Representative texts
Spiritual gifts	The Spirit distributes gifts for the common good and believers should desire edifying gifts.	No gift or manifestation authenticates doctrine automatically.	1 Cor 12-14; 1 Pet 4:10-11
Healing	Churches should pray for the sick and trust God's power.	Immediate healing is not promised as the universal outcome of sufficient faith.	Jas 5:14-16; 2 Cor 12:7-10
Prophecy	Prophetic speech is not to be despised and must be weighed.	Later prophecy cannot add binding doctrine or override Scripture.	1 Thess 5:19-22; 1 Cor 14:29; 1 Jn 4:1
Prosperity	God provides, generosity matters, and work is good.	Wealth is not a reliable measure of faith or divine favor.	Matt 6:19-34; Phil 4:11-13; 1 Tim 6:3-19
Apostolic ministry	Missionary pioneering and translocal service remain necessary.	No modern leader possesses the foundational doctrinal authority of Christ's commissioned apostles.	Eph 2:19-20; Gal 1:8-9
Leadership	The church needs recognized, gifted leaders.	Gifting never excuses greed, domination, sexual misconduct, or doctrinal error.	1 Tim 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9; 1 Pet 5:1-4
Unity	The Spirit creates one body and believers should pursue peace.	Experience cannot erase contradictory truth claims or another gospel.	Eph 4:1-16; Jn 17:20-23; Gal 1:6-9

18. Contemporary Significance

The structures created between 1960 and 2000 remain central to Christianity in 2026. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal has not disappeared into a historical footnote. The Holy See's creation of CHARIS, effective in 2019, institutionalized an international service of communion for diverse charismatic Catholic realities rather than turning them into a separate church. In May 2026, Pope Leo XIV addressed members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and described the decades after Vatican II as a period of expansion and integration into Catholic life. This continuity confirms one of the chapter's central claims: charismatic spirituality can persist for generations without producing denominational exit when the parent communion creates space for it (Francis, 2019; Leo XIV, 2026).

The Vineyard likewise remains a transnational family, while Calvary Chapel's church-planting network continues far beyond its Southern California origin. Their worship and ministry practices have influenced churches that never formally joined either movement. Contemporary Christian worship, prayer ministry, small-group structures, and informal ecclesial culture across evangelicalism still bear the marks of the Jesus Movement and later charismatic renewal.

Network Christianity has become even more important in the digital era. The late twentieth-century platform of television, conference, cassette, and publishing has been supplemented by livestreaming, podcasts, YouTube, social media, online giving, virtual ministry schools, and instant global circulation of prophecy. The basic authority problem, however, is unchanged. A leader can now acquire transnational influence even faster and with fewer mediating institutions. Digital reach magnifies both faithful teaching and error.

The prosperity controversy also remains global. In many regions, prosperity language has softened into broader themes of empowerment, purpose, leadership, entrepreneurship, or "living your best life," while more explicit seed-faith formulas continue elsewhere. The theological test must remain the same. Scripture encourages diligence, generosity, wise stewardship, and confidence in God's provision; it does not promise that faithful giving will reliably produce material abundance.

The most important contemporary legacy may be the collapse of easy equations between denomination and theology. Labels remain useful, but they no longer tell the whole story. To understand a congregation today, one must often ask not only to which denomination it belongs but which media teachers it follows, which worship networks shape it, which conferences train its leaders, which prophetic or apostolic relationships authorize it, and which digital communities form its members.

For researchers and church leaders, this means that genealogy must become multidimensional. Institutional descent still matters, but so do influence, media, network affiliation, worship culture, theological borrowing, and founder-centered succession. The Christian family tree of the twenty-first century is partly a tree and partly a web.

19. Genealogical Summary

Table 7. Genealogical summary: charismatic Christianity and independent network forms, AD 1960-2000

Field	Chapter 11 genealogical finding
Parent tradition	Classical Pentecostalism, postwar evangelicalism, historic Protestant denominations, Roman Catholicism, healing revivalism, and older restorationist currents contributed in different ways; there is no single institutional parent.
Approximate emergence	Public charismatic-renewal phase from 1960; Catholic renewal from 1967; Third Wave and large network forms especially from the late 1970s through the 1990s.
Geographical origin	Multiple centers: Southern California, Seattle, Pittsburgh/Notre Dame, Tulsa, Chicago, and numerous independent centers, followed rapidly by polycentric development in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe.
Principal actors	Dennis Bennett, David du Plessis, Demos Shakarian, Michael Harper, Catholic renewal leaders, Chuck Smith, Lonnie Frisbee, John Wimber, C. Peter Wagner, Kenneth E. Hagin, Oral Roberts, Shepherding-movement leaders, major megachurch pastors, and indigenous leaders across Latin America, Africa, and Asia.
Immediate trigger	Pentecostal-type experiences within non-Pentecostal churches; dissatisfaction with institutional formalism; search for healing and spiritual gifts; new youth and media cultures; rapid urban church growth.
Deeper causes	Postwar mobility, mass media, evangelical parachurch cooperation, globalization, urbanization, denominational decline in some regions, restorationist readings of Acts and Ephesians, and entrepreneurial religious organization.
Authority structure	Ranges from inherited episcopal or denominational structures to independent nonprofit ministries, megachurch pastorates, covenant communities, and relational apostolic-prophetic networks.
Principal doctrinal distinctives	Continuation of gifts, healing, prophecy, Spirit empowerment, contemporary worship, signs and wonders, faith/confession teaching, prosperity in some streams, and restored apostolic-prophetic ministries in some networks.
Immediate branches	Historic Protestant charismatic renewal; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Jesus Movement-derived churches; shepherding/covenant networks; Vineyard/Third Wave; Word of Faith; prosperity and media ministries; independent apostolic-prophetic networks.
Later descendants	Neo-charismatic churches, global worship networks, digital ministries, transnational apostolic networks, independent megachurches, and hybrid congregations shaped by multiple movement streams.
Present-day presence	Global and transdenominational. Charismatic spirituality remains present in Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal, evangelical, independent, and network churches, especially across the Global South.
Major biblical questions	Do all spiritual gifts continue, and how are they tested? What authority may contemporary prophecy possess? Is healing guaranteed? Does Scripture promise material prosperity? In what sense may modern leaders be called apostles? How should churches combine charismatic freedom with accountable order?

The summary reveals why Chapter 11 cannot be represented by one branching line. Some developments were internal renewals of old communions; others were new denominations; others were para-denominational networks; others were ministry models copied across unrelated churches. The period's defining genealogical change was therefore the multiplication of mechanisms by which Christian traditions reproduce themselves.

20. Conclusion: From Network Christianity to the African Century

Between 1960 and 2000, charismatic Christianity changed the organizational grammar of modern Christianity. Dennis Bennett's public testimony demonstrated that Pentecostal-type experience could enter a historic Protestant denomination

without requiring immediate denominational conversion. Catholic charismatics then carried similar practices into a sacramental communion whose theology of church and authority remained fundamentally different from Protestant Pentecostalism. The Jesus Movement connected evangelical conversion, youth counterculture, contemporary music, informal worship, and charismatic expectation. John Wimber and the Third Wave brought signs-and-wonders practice into evangelical church-growth and seminary contexts while weakening the assumption that charismatic gifts required classical Pentecostal initiation theology.

Word of Faith and prosperity teaching created another line of development, combining healing, confession, covenant expectation, media entrepreneurship, and, in some forms, promises of material blessing that exceeded the balance of the biblical witness. Megachurch and seeker-sensitive movements, though not direct descendants of charismatic renewal, converged organizationally with it through contemporary worship, leadership networks, research-driven ministry, and transferable church models. Apostolic-prophetic networks then pushed beyond denominational logic by restoring titles and authority structures they believed belonged to the New Testament Church. Independent ministries used television, publishing, cassettes, conferences, and global travel to form transnational constituencies that could be as influential as denominations while remaining institutionally fluid.

The period corrected real deficiencies. It challenged cessationist complacency, clerical passivity, culturally inaccessible worship, missionary timidity, and forms of institutional Christianity that had little expectation of the Spirit's active work. It also exposed new dangers. Experience could outrun exegesis. Prophecy could become unaccountable revelation. healing could become a guarantee. Giving could become a transaction. Apostolic leadership could become personal government without meaningful appeal. Media success could become a surrogate for spiritual authority. Independence could become isolation from correction.

The apostolic benchmark holds these tensions together. Christians are commanded to walk by the Spirit, desire gifts, pray for the sick, worship with gratitude, evangelize boldly, and refuse a form of godliness emptied of divine power. They are equally commanded to test every claim, guard the gospel, appoint qualified leaders, expose greed, maintain order, care for the weak, and refuse any angel, prophet, apostle, tradition, or institution that contradicts the revealed Word. The biblical alternative to dead institutionalism is not untested charisma. It is Spirit-filled faithfulness under Scripture.

By 2000, the demographic consequences of this transformation were increasingly visible outside the old North Atlantic centers of Christianity. Some of the most dynamic Pentecostal and charismatic growth was occurring across Africa, Latin America, and Asia, where imported traditions were being indigenized and where new churches were becoming missionary senders in their own right. No region better demonstrates the complexity of ancient roots, missionary inheritance, indigenous initiative, prophetic religion, Pentecostal expansion, and neo-charismatic networking than Africa. The next chapter therefore turns from the global network revolution to the continent whose Christian history is both far older and far more internally diverse than the common story of modern missionary arrival suggests.

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